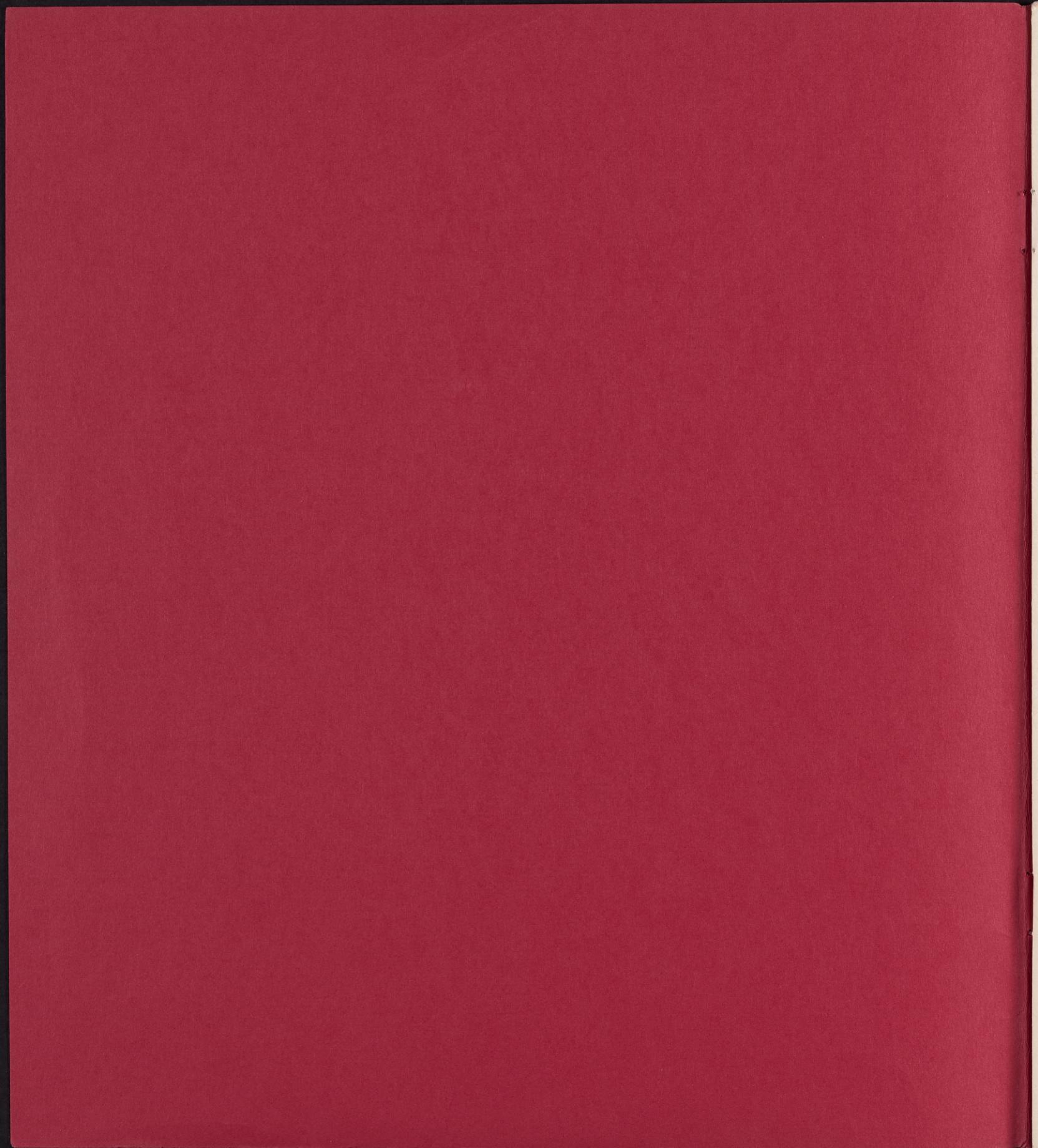


# GAY \* LITERATURE

WINTER 1976/NUMBER FIVE



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# GAY LITERATURE

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# Banana Report

by N. A. Diaman

Dr. Nowitz, sometimes called the Viennese pastry because of a life-long passion for strudel acquired during his early days as a medical student in the Austrian capital, addressed a recent meeting of the American Psychiatric Association in the Napoleon Room of New York's famous Hotel Eclair. His controversial findings concerning certain sexual practices are printed here without comment.

\* \* \*

What I have come to say to you today is simply that science now knows beyond a shadow of a doubt that bananas are the principal cause of male homosexuality in this country and furthermore there is a strong causal relationship between this exotic tropical fruit and the increase of oral sexual practices among heterosexual women.

I first began this study when I discovered that all the male chimpanzees who exhibited homosexual behavior ate bananas. It was so obvious yet so profound that I wondered why no one had thought about it before. The banana is the missing link. After all those reckless years of theorizing about homosexuality, the answer was right under our noses.

We must look at what the banana represents to the innocent child and the impressionable young adult. I have seen time and time again the inherent psychological danger caused by this insidious fruit when it is given to a little boy. It not only arouses his hidden phallic memory but also releases acute dormant psychosexual hostility directed against the father as authority figure. Thus the child symbolically and cere-

moniously appropriates the power of the male parent by consuming the banana, undermining the role of his father and denying himself that role in later life.

While we cannot be sure how many bananas it takes to develop an oral obsession, we do know that the initial reliance on bananas does lead to more serious difficulties. As a man confirms his banana habit, it becomes more difficult for him to validate his masculinity because of the endless search for the perfect banana. When the bananas themselves do not satisfy his hunger, the decadent adult male goes on to harder things, transferring his taste for bananas to its corresponding sexual parallel. For a man who has reached this point, there is little hope for rehabilitation.

The discovery of *Homo Banana Sexualis* near the ruins of the long-lost Ba'na temple deep in the Panamanian jungles confirmed my suspicions of an ancient fruit religion in Central America. Records of this once-flourishing civilization were carefully inscribed on petrified banana skins. Their deciphering has been slow and arduous but quite fruitful.

The annual initiation rite of the Ba'na involved the gathering of two hundred young boys with their bodies painted yellow to form a living banana bunch. During their strange ceremonies these boys would break-off to sing and dance across the golden stage above the altar where the Great Banana stood. The main temple was destroyed by the invading Europeans, but many of the smaller shrines have been used to store bananas to this day.

Some of the Ba'na priests escaped disguised as fruit merchants, not only introducing bananas abroad but also bringing with them their peculiar religious and sexual practices. And so homosexuality began to spread secretly around the world through this strange long yellow fruit.

By comparing the fruit market statistics in the

United States over the last fifty years with case histories involving male homosexuality, it is evident that the rising sales of bananas correspond quite closely with an increase in male homosexuality. The one exception is the early-to mid-nineteen forties, when the amount of bananas imported remained steady while the number of men exported rose because of the Second World War so that a scarcity of domestic homosexuality occurred. Of course we don't know what the little foxes were doing in their holes while they were away.

We can see further inroads this fruit has made in the American consciousness if we look back to certain old movies and comic strips which showed men slipping on banana peels. Perhaps some people found that funny, but it was also a grim warning that this fruit would someday undermine the sanity of the country. Also a careful look at Carmen Miranda and Chiquita Banana will show how transvestism has influenced American fashion so that it is now impossible to tell women from men and men from women.

Furthermore, we cannot fail to recognize the ominous implications of the banana split, a dessert which clearly indicates potential sexual schizophrenia, especially when we stop to think that it is served with three scoops of different flavored ice cream and topped with nuts, cream and a preserved cherry. Eating such a concoction is certainly an unnatural act.

And some of our finest biblical scholars have come up with mighty convincing evidence that the forbidden fruit in the Garden of Eden was indeed the banana. God had good reason to be apprehensive when Eve ate the first banana, and He went absolutely fugs when He found out that she gave a banana to Adam. It was then that they were kicked out of the Garden lest they develop an acute sexual identity crisis at a time when professional psychiatric help was not available.

I think we need some laws to help us cope with this problem. Now I am not suggesting a total ban on the sale of bananas. I think such legislation would be premature. I am not opposed

to women eating bananas unless an overindulgence creates a weight problem. After all, times have changed. A moderate habit is quite acceptable for a woman in our present society and it is the man who stands to gain in the long run from her experience.

Having considered the effects of the banana, we should also turn our attention to the orange. What strikes us first are the obvious differences in shape and texture. While the banana is long and virile, the orange is compact and tender. Yet these two fruits are similar in that the skins must be peeled in order to reach the vital juices inside. This is very significant.

When I studied the diets of top corporation executives I found that each of them drank anywhere from six to eight glasses of orange juice at breakfast each and every morning before going to work. All these men are avowed heterosexuals who claim to lead active sex lives. One man I interviewed said he learned what competition was all about at an early age by stuffing himself with more oranges than any other boy in his class and he attributes his rise to success to this simple early lesson. If you will show me a man who has failed in life, I will show you a man who doesn't eat oranges.

Oranges, on the other hand, have ruined many a young woman's life by changing her focus in life from the sweet bliss of marriage and motherhood to a strange craving for a work career and independence. This of course can only lead to unhappiness in later life when she discovers what she has missed not raising a family. When one of these women reaches the top of her field, she is bound to want the same rewards her male counterpart enjoys, such as a car, house, wife—and this is where the seeds of lesbianism are most apparent.

Traditionally lesbians have been classified by the kind of citrus fruit they prefer, this of course because of the old Greek legend of the Amazons, who were well-known as fruit pickers in ancient times. This also explains why their hangouts are often referred to as fruit bars. The husky, hefty

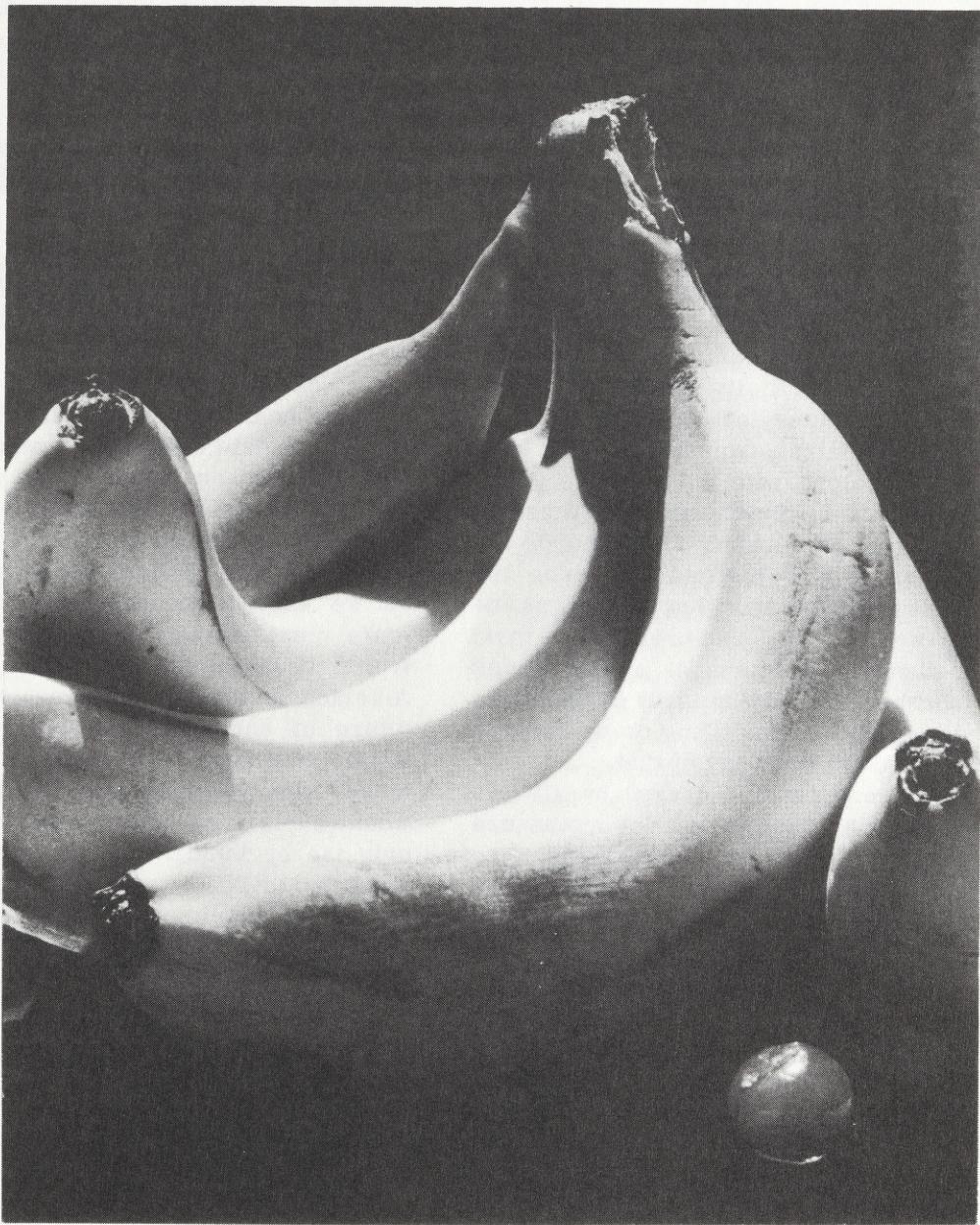


PHOTO BY MICHAEL MCRED

lesbians are almost always seen carrying around a sack of tangelos as they swagger along the street. And the toughest of them are rumored to be heavy grapefruit eaters. While the more petite lesbians eat only delicate tangerines and are more modest in their habit; they usually carry a ripe one in their purse. More recently lesbians involved in the women's liberation movement have taken to eating just plain oranges as a protest against role playing.

It is shocking that these women have come a long way from the days of their grandmothers. Surely many of them must miss the quaint customs of the past, which included sticking cloves into oranges to create sweet smelling sachets for their closets, an act which symbolized the exorcism of their masculinity and the relegation of it to its proper place, out of sight. Alas, so many of those wonderful aromatic devices have been thrown out along with many a fine gown, only to be replaced by fresh fruit and trousers.

One of the things we must do is go back to the schools and make sure the children know the difference between pink and blue as well as the difference between bananas and oranges. We must impress on them the importance of not mixing colors or fruit because mixing leads to confusion and confusion leads to chaos and chaos leads to anarchy, and we don't want any of that.

Some of you may be discouraged by all this talk of bananas and oranges, but let me assure you that not all fruit is bad. It is the apple so dear to the hearts of all Americans which has provided a balanced mental state for the great

majority of people in this country. It is no accident that Mom's Apple Pie has always been a favorite. One of the mottos of the American pioneer was: "An apple a day keeps the doctor away." And it was none other than Johnny Appleseed whose vision of a strong and healthy nation inspired him to sow his seeds from coast to coast.

Surely many of you here will remember the candied apples of the past and how exciting a time childhood was because of those treats. The American dream could become a nightmare if children are given candied bananas or oranges and they bite down into the bitter peels of those fruits, their childhood memories forever marred by traumas.

Or, even worse, picture a world where all men are homosexuals and all women are lesbians. The immediate consequence would be a decrease in population and an increase in rotten apples. The cities would eventually be overrun by banana jungles and orange groves. Civilization would reverse itself. There would be no cars. Life as we know it today would cease to exist.

We must devote more study to these and other fruits because here in the supermarkets of America is the key to human sexuality and the future of humanity. Yet there is still so much we do not know. The banana, the orange, the apple—who would have thought these three fruits would explain so much of our behavior? This is only the beginning of research in what I call the Fruit Salad Theory of Sexuality. What secrets do these many fruits still hold? Only time will tell.

# Song of Gabriel

by William Alan Robinson

O that he would kiss me  
with the kisses of his mouth!  
His love is stronger than wine;  
fragrant oils please the senses,  
but no way compared to the  
smell of his body.  
Pull me towards you;  
quickly, let us go to  
your bed.  
Let us glory in the  
closeness of our throbbing bodies.  
My king is on his couch,  
my prince within his sheets.  
His head on my chest  
is like a bouquet of roses  
laced with lilies.  
Your eyes, my love, are moonstones;  
your mouth, my darling,  
a cool well.  
O let me drink deep  
of that refreshing spring!  
Your hair is golden silk;  
honeyed satin, it falls and sweeps.  
You are a young stag  
amongst mules,  
a blushing deer  
next to old nags.  
As the ripe cherry  
next to green apples, is my lover  
compared to young men.  
My delight is to rest my  
burning head

in his cool lap.

Sweet is the fruit he offers,  
refreshing its juices.

I am sick with love.  
His strong arm under me,  
    his hands caressing.

O the voice of my beloved!  
    Pure, melodious like a  
golden bell.

His laugh, a silver cymbal.  
He whispers to me:

    "Awake my lover, arise.  
Kiss my open mouth,  
    pull me closer,  
share my body.

Enter me and feel my love."  
He is my lover and I am his  
    only beloved.

In my bed at night  
    I feel for him  
and he is always there.

In my sleep I call out  
and he answers me.

I will go and make him  
mine alone.

I will follow the path  
of his love,  
    the beacon of his heart  
and never again leave his side.

His lips are like  
scarlet petals,  
    his mouth, cool and pleasant.

His breast is like two  
    shields of burnished oak,  
his skin like oiled silk.

His cheeks are smooth.  
His eyes are the stars of heaven,  
    forever distant, yet  
burning brightly.

His neck is an ivory pillar,  
strong, polished and lovely to kiss.  
    For me he removes his tunic;  
his thighs are columns  
    fitted for the palace  
of a prince.

His stomach, a wooded hillock  
bathed in milk.

At the foot is planted  
the eternal cedar, tall and strong,  
    ready and able.

Two perfect pearls lie  
    buried beneath.

This is my beloved, this is  
    he who enters me with  
the thrust of lightning,  
    the groan of thunder.

When his floodgates open,  
    beauty pours into me.

I am my darling's; he is my  
    only lover.

You who dwell in gardens,  
    listen to my song;  
Love speaks with the voice  
    of ages.

—Raphael.

# In Process (For Jim)

by J. D. Butkie

## I. (i)

At age ten,  
I relished  
making dolls. And dressing them up.  
Below the crooked plum tree,  
home  
for large red ants  
in our backyard,  
I could usually find on the ground  
a few twigs about the right size.  
These I used to fashion  
stick figures.  
Sneaking  
some of mother's colored threads and  
scraps of sewing material  
from the dented cookie tin,  
I designed  
just the right  
full-length dresses and accessories;  
(Female stick figures  
were my favorites.)  
One time,  
after a Saturday evening supper,  
Mom caught me  
playing with my creations  
in semi-darkness. The stuffy  
third-floor attic—I called  
them my puppets, a silly  
new Cub Scout project.  
That eased her mind  
a bit  
I think.

## I. (ii)

Up in years, due for retirement,  
Sister Felecissima, F.S.S.J.,  
grade school principal  
of Saint Stanislaus Kostka Parochial,  
would redmark tests after  
school without  
shoes. Once,  
while dusting beneath  
the front row, I discovered  
barefeet positioned atop unlaced shoes  
under "Cissy's" desk—dread  
misfortune  
of sniffing a nun's  
sweaty feet  
at thirteen.  
Her expected  
lavender scent  
vanished; she hadn't noticed; we shared  
nods.  
I was chosen—  
the most promising, well-  
behaved boy in and out of class  
(room monitor/teacher's pet/all-around-sissy)—  
to deliver the day's mail from  
the adjoining convent to Sister's  
eighth grade room; I was selected  
without fail.  
What Sister really didn't know  
was why I was always so  
very benign,  
happy to help during midday break—  
my own secret tucked  
away where no one could ever finger it.  
Every noon, after a quick cafeteria  
lunch,  
I would race to the corner  
of Cherry and Pulaski  
to meet my mailman  
on the beautician's narrow stoop—  
five minutes after Angelus bells.  
Always  
steering clear  
of the convent gate, greasy

(for whatever reason)  
to the touch.  
Eventually, he got to know me  
by name, acknowledging a good worker. He laughed;  
we shared the same baptismal name, that of the Virgin  
Mary's spouse.  
A bond. Sometimes  
rubbed his knuckles  
through my hair and joked  
about my punctuality. Never absent.  
I prized his furry, sweaty arms; trimmed  
moustache; wavy, black hair; wrinkled  
uniform of office—  
the area  
behind  
his knees especially  
deserved attention.  
That Italo-American's farewell  
half-hug, grasp, pat (or  
combination thereof)  
made me  
an even better boy before  
greeting my teacher with  
proper salutation: "Praise  
be Jesus Christ (bowing head), Good  
afternoon, Sister Felecissima. Here  
is Sister's mail for today."  
An affirming smile  
signaled  
her approval.

## II.

Uncle Stoshu  
dribbled a trickle of water  
from the dented aluminum casing—  
sixth can of Schlitz  
onto his sunburning body.  
Mingled with the sweat  
already layered on his hairy chest and stomach;  
the lounging chief of police  
slapped his flabby thighs  
as he savored a few  
new off-color jokes with

Bubsie and Koo, neighbors.  
He got serious though  
at the mention  
of Jeannie Miskiewicz getting  
knocked up.  
A few months before,  
while midnight patrolling  
All Saints' Cemetery for kids'  
booze parties,  
Stosh had flashlighted  
the sixteen-year-old engaged  
in some back seat doings with some public  
high school kid.  
He had warned her—even  
went so far to tell her parents  
to be extra careful these days.  
Didn't work.  
What the hell; at least,  
she had a rectory wedding.  
Quiet.  
Still in the church: a part.  
Stosh had told his on-the-spot story  
quickly, quietly; Aggie  
was swaying nearby with  
the highball-drinking  
wives.  
Couldn't let  
such talk reach  
women's ears.  
Not on a Sunday  
visit to his brother's bungalow.  
I recall sipping  
some lemonade  
on the rusty porchswing—  
safely enough away  
from the company  
of belchers.  
Humming.

## III.

A withering fern green dropped cinnamon spec  
spores into my shaking hands—  
sticky with sperm still

warm  
from beating off.  
Shaded beneath clusters of red sumac berries.  
Alone. Trapped  
in shadows  
on Stony Point.

IV.

How do you inform—break  
the news to—that young, yet untenured  
professor of poetry:  
married, two  
kids starting  
school soon,  
Roman Catholic,  
practicing  
every day at morning  
Mass: receives,  
and suffering from piles—  
that you want to wet  
prematurely  
greying sideburns (both  
of them now)  
with kisses, smoothe his undoubtedly thick,  
curly chesthair, move  
underarm, and  
for a finale,  
taste  
his cockshaft  
bursting with sperm  
on a fat, watering tongue;  
I mean, gracefully?  
Maybe an ejaculation  
would help. To Anthony  
of Padua,  
patron saint extraordinaire  
of hopeless cases. Near  
hopeless? A devout  
agnostic  
in college chapel  
crosses himself  
behind his instructor  
as the priest officiating

swirls  
into the vestibule  
with purple vestments flapping.

V.

I had two  
links of smoked sausage,  
fried to a crisp  
(filmy skin  
resembling charred flesh,  
first degree burns),  
on a soft roll with  
carroway seeds sticking  
between my teeth.  
A water glass  
filled with German  
white wine  
a third of the way. A chipped  
dish  
of chocolate ice cream,  
two scoops, too many calories.  
Afterwards,  
wiping greasy and sticky fingers in white  
paper napkins and attending  
to the dishes. Final  
beams of light catch  
flying dust  
from the half-closed venetian blinds,  
and I finish off  
the last  
line of a new poem,  
as you grip  
my shoulders  
with steady hands, soothing  
tense neck muscles.  
I leave my noisy manual  
(two keys jammed together),  
led to my plaid blanketed  
bed by my secret  
week-end friend,  
ever discreet,  
the horny bookseller  
from Cambridge, Mass. Forty-two years

of life suffered inward.  
Paying alimony. No kids,  
thank God. No  
reason to kill the man: not guilty  
of fathering.  
Words don't come now,  
and the Lord won't bat an eye  
as I try to perfect my hidden poem  
on a wrinkling bedspread.

#### VI. (i)

"Don't consider me a god"—  
carefully chosen  
words (for a younger man)  
frosty  
in winter-solstice nightair.  
Passing along  
a row of French lantern  
guideposts/beacons  
(for motel guests ONLY)—  
fixtures  
with fluted  
black base,  
the two of us quicken  
our pace back  
to our lodging's  
warmth--bellies  
filled  
with prime rib served on hotplate  
and cheesecake with strawberry topping.  
Silence beckons  
to chalet 711,  
and the door sticks  
for impatient lovers,  
parted for a month.  
These words not needed  
for the initiated:  
St Louis  
frowns upon  
gay gods or gargoyles—  
of any denomination.

by El Gilbert

## At the Rod

Western music and wagon wheels;  
cock rings and key chains.  
A lost figure by the men's room.  
A dude in a black cowboy hat.  
Two guys in the corner getting it on.  
An Andy Warhol chick in white makeup  
and a T-shirt.  
Perspiration crawling under the tables.  
Loneliness hanging around the jukebox.  
A question. A pose.  
Doubt. Wonder.  
Red lights overhead.  
Misplaced beeboppers without answers.  
A line to get into the john.  
Motorcycle helmets over the bar:  
prized trophies, the membership cards  
to acceptance.  
A small circular fan in the back door.  
Leather lugs looking identical  
in their uniforms.  
Dark curtains at the window.  
A street light shining through.  
Elton John challenging Charlie Rich.  
Empty Budweiser cans.  
Cigarette wrappers, match books,  
ash trays filled with butts.  
Thumbs in waist bands.  
A Puerto Rican in a vinyl jacket.  
A high-blown whistle.  
Uneasiness, fear, desire, want,  
need, greed.  
Hands reaching across the floor.  
Not responsible for lost articles.  
No credit.  
Think, save some for later.  
The floods are rising  
and the nights grow longer.

# The Story of Different

by Stephen Wright

I could write a book on the anthology I have compiled for Bantam Books. At the outset, let me say that the initial idea for the book, *Different: An Anthology of Homosexual Short Stories*, had wide acceptance among publishers and agents. There are, however, many problems that beset the unwary, inexperienced anthologist.

For one, in this kind of anthology, you have to read widely — as far as possible reading every homosexual story ever written! When you hear of a good story, you start haunting the libraries, going to out-of-the-way places in the city to find the one story you are looking for. You also have to go through scores of amateurishly written stories in gay publications, hoping you will come upon a decently written story you can use. This is not impossible, but with the literary standards set for story-telling by many gay magazines, it is highly improbable. So, at the end, you rely on the old stand-bys, whose well-written stories on homosexual themes are not always up to date or indicative of gay sensibility.

Some representatives of well-known, establishment authors—for instance, Tennessee Williams, Colette, E. M. Forster—absolutely refused to have their authors contribute any stories to “*An Anthology of Homosexual Short Stories*,” believing that they were “protecting” their authors—from exactly what, I do not know. After all, shouldn’t the quality of the other stories to be included and the reputation of the authors be the only criteria? But if the title had been, say, *The Short Story Since World War II* or even *An Anthology of Contemporary Sexual Themes* (of course to make it go there would have to be a couple of other “contemporary sexual themes”) I would have fared better with the representatives of these illustrious authors. One agent, to whom I had sent a contract for approval—the publisher’s standard permission agreement—threatened to do

me great harm if I used the story in question. Ridiculous, for no publisher—let alone anthologist—would be so foolish as to print a story without the necessary, and of course legal, written permission. I was hurt and angry, but wisely decided to keep my mouth shut before I got more involved. So I did not even have the normal privilege of telling that particular agent off, who most assuredly deserved it. If I had been acting on my own, I might have, but I was acting in behalf of a publisher and therefore powerless.

By far the most understanding of the groups of publishers, agents, and authors whom I correspond with, and negotiated with, for the stories were the authors themselves. Several writers interceded on my behalf when their agents simply refused to answer my letters requesting permission to reprint their stories or when the agents demanded exorbitant payments for the permissions. Christopher Isherwood, a most kind, simpatico gentleman, said I should try again, and if his agent refused to answer me or would not grant me the rights, I should tell him and he would take care of it. But I had no need to, for immediately I was sent the agent’s own permission forms with a fair charge being made for his story (“On Reugen Island,” from *The Berlin Stories*).

Neither anthologies nor paperbacks are popular in the review media—and my book is both. I need hardly add that reviewers, like authors, are human after all, and may be prejudiced against themes in homophile literature, in spite of the fact that many of the writers included are acknowledged to be superior, and not a few are world-famous.

Nonetheless, where others with similar “off-beat books” had failed, I would succeed, I vowed. From a promotional standpoint, there are two reasons. My publisher, Bantam Books, has assiduously pursued sales and reviews. Indeed, it

has tried in every way to promote and publicize the book, from a superb spread in its own "Bantam News" to special releases about my book to book dealers and others in the media. This treatment is most unusual, for generally paperbacks are simply gotten on the stands—if they are lucky, shelf space being so scarce nowadays. In reality, of course, my book, often as not, is hidden in an out-of-the-way place with other story collections. I noticed that book dealers usually have a hard time deciding on which shelf to put my book.

The thing that started my book off, though, was one of those exceptionally well-written, brief, advance reviews in *Publishers Weekly*. This review, which I shall quote in its entirety, surely influenced many booksellers, at least initially, to stock the book:

"**DIFFERENT:** An Anthology of Homosexual Short Stories, Edited by Stephen Wright. Bantam, \$1.95.

"The theme for this anthology may seem obvious, but it's almost unique. The range of the collection is remarkably broad—from two stories attributed to Oscar Wilde all the way to Gore Vidal, by way of Henry James, D. H. Lawrence and Christopher Isherwood (represented by one of the Berlin stories). Some are from the sensitive pre-gay-lib English school (an excerpt from Howard Overing Sturgis's "Tim"), some from the contemporary scene (Phil Andros's "Stud"), and there's even an SF excursion by Charles Beaumont depicting a world where gay is good and straight is very, very bad. All in all, a fascinatingly varied read, even for nonhomophiles."

The second reason is that I, who naturally have a good knowledge of gay publications, which would be genuinely interested and concerned with

reviewing *Different*, decided that I would help out my publisher by sending out review copies to selected publications. I did and the results were gratifying.

Being an anthologist is a hard road, with little or no recognition of one's literary talents. But, all in all, I enjoyed it, and would gladly do it again. However, the sales of the anthology so far (approximately 20,000 copies sold in the first year) have not come up to my publisher's expectations. This rate of sale is not considered adequate for the paperback mass market, and the likelihood of a second volume seems at this time slight.

I am certain that the book would have sold better if it were stocked by more gay book dealers. Unfortunately, the average gay dealer in the large metropolitan areas confines his sale of reading matter to pornographic fare, not surprising when one realizes his sales come mostly from "toys" (dildoes, vibrators, and the like), pornographic films and stills, as well as all kinds of picture books with explicit sex scenes that leave nothing to the imagination. Books of literary quality, like *Different*, are seldom available. Thus the gay reader of the "adult" bookshop is given no choice in reading matter.

Then, too, most straight paperback shops are reluctant to stock the book. The straight random reader does not care to read gay fiction.

It should also be noted that anthologies in general—with the possible exception of mystery anthologies—do not enjoy a wide readership.

One thing that has made me a little unhappy as an editor is that I have received very few letters from readers. But perhaps that is the way it should be, for in an anthology only the stories are important.

# Mr. Right

by Daniel Curzon

And so Zeus soaring in the air with eagle wings snatched up  
The Trojan boy who still in heaven yet doth bear his cup.

Ovid

The boy was dozing on the hill when the splotch of gold swooped out of the sky toward him. In his anxiety for his sheep, Ganymede dropped his staff, but ran toward the flock, thinking to protect it with his own body if need be. Fear of his father's wrath was greater than fear of the approaching eagle. If a single sheep were lost, he knew his father would shriek for days, even lock him inside Troy's walls and not let him out for a month. Confused, guilt-laden about having dozed when he should have been watching for mishaps, he ran back for his staff, adjusting his tunic, which he had pulled up and tucked into his cincture to catch the last buttery rays of the sun on his thighs.

The eagle was now plummeting out of the heavens straight toward Ganymede's head, and the boy looked up half in dread, half in awe. Then suddenly the undulant wings spread themselves to capture the winds—almost as if the eagle were about to embrace him. But no. Surely it meant only to rip its talons through his flaxen hair, already snarled with small twigs from the hill-side. The eagle made a strange sound, part scream, but also part something else . . . like the sound a dove would make. Ganymede found his staff, which had slid down the hill into some tall bushes, and grabbed it with both hands, raising it with both handsomely muscled arms. "Fie!" he shouted at the eagle, and a ewe bleated at the recognition of danger and ran toward the

rest of the flock. The other sheep and lambs took up the cry and their bleating carried across the vale into the surrounding gorges. "Fie! Be gone!" Ganymede cried at the eagle, which was now agitating its large wings as it hovered over him. Oh, to have my father's bow with me! Ganymede cursed to himself.

After one languid circle, the eagle landed on a nearby boulder, and Ganymede could see now that it was three times as large as any eagle he had ever seen before. It shook itself, then preened its burnished feathers, its hooked beak darting back and forth, the eyes like metal discs and yet almost . . . almost human.

Suddenly the eagle's breast began to turn into a human chest, then its legs into human legs. Ganymede raised his hands to his face, feeling the flush of amazement and panic in his own cheeks. What has happening to him? Was he daydreaming, unable to wake?

"I have come for thee, boy," the eagle, a baritone, said, its beak turning into lips.

"But who are you?" Ganymede couldn't draw his eyes away from the miracle before him on the boulder.

"I am Father Zeus. I have come for thee."

"For me? But why?"

"I am Father of the Gods, and I have become enamored of thee, boy."

Ganymede's mouth parted in uncertainty.

"Yes, beloved. I have watched thee from the

domain of the Gods day following day as you've strolled and slumbered on these hillsides, and today I have at last come for thee. I wish to take thee back to Mt. Olympus with me." Zeus smiled, his eyes alight.

Ganymede stumbled on a stone, but recovered gracefully, inflaming Zeus's heart still more. "But, Sir . . . thou knowest me not," he said.

"I know I will never rest until thou share my bed," Zeus said boldly. "Come, ride astride my back and I will soar with thee to the empyrean . . . aloft, aloft where thou, like us, need never die!"

Ganymede took a step forward, then stopped. "But . . . my father! He will be angry."

"Leave him! Thou art the son of Tros and Callirhoe no longer. Henceforth thou art mine alone. And I thine!"

Ganymede took another step, but again halted. "Yet my father will have no one to tend his flock."

"Well, then, beauteous boy, I will give him recompense." Zeus searched his mighty brain for a moment. "AH! I will give a gift of a golden vine that I much prize." He summoned the vine at once and let it float toward Ganymede, before whom it rested.

But Ganymede said nothing.

"What? Is this not recompense enough?" Zeus asked.

"Well . . . what can my father do with a golden vine?" he asked quietly, intimidated somewhat by the divine presence. "Why not just give him gold coins?"

"MORTALS!" Zeus roared. "Such mundane requirements!" He explored his vast mind again, then said, "I will gift him with these two immortal horses, swifter than any steeds on earth!" And out of a passing cloud Zeus created the horses and set them by the sheep, which bleated frantically. "Now come, sweet, comely lad, and climb aboard my eagle's back, and we will flash to Mt. Olympus."

And still Ganymede hesitated, tripling the passion of the Father of the Gods. "Yet what

will we do there once we arrive?"

"We will make love! Of course!"

"But I am only a mortal. Won't my body corrupt in time, and fall away to nothingness? And then what will become of me?"

"Ah, delightful, calculating boy, I will never forsake thee. And *should* I do, I vow that I shall make thee into a star." Zeus pointed his wings toward the sky.

"Others have been promised such," Ganymede said doubtfully, taking a step backward.

"Shall I make thee into a whole constellation?" Zeus asked stormily. "It's thine, rapturous lad. I promise thee as I am Lord of Everything!"

Ganymede hesitated, but then said, "I petition thee, Great Zeus, that I may have a useful place among the divinities. I don't want to be a star . . . but could I beg for the position of cupbearer to the gods?"

"It will mean warring with Hera, my wife, but DONE!" Zeus bellowed, shaking the gorges, frightening the sheep and the two immortal horses.

"My thanks, Royal Sir," Ganymede bowed, truly happy.

"Now, well-made boy, whose beauty knots my heart, come, run, leap onto my back. Come with me from lowly Mt. Ida to Mt. Olympus, and let me show you the delights above that only the Gods know!"

Ganymede rushed toward the boulder, and began to climb onto great Zeus's back, a back both of superhuman muscle and sleek feathers, as the Father of the Gods started to metamorphose himself back completely into an eagle for the flight.

"All right, enough of this perverted filth!" a voice commanded, and a member of the Trojan Vice Squad stepped out of his hiding place in the bushes. He snapped a handcuff around the eagle's left leg, and called for his partner, who was crouched on the other side of the boulder. "You're under arrest for corrupting a minor—possibly child molesting—and attempted sodomy. We're going to cook your goose, you old *buzzard*, you!"

# The Cost of Kindness

by Rolf Jarlsson

The man asked the boy if he could buy him a drink. The boy said he could. The man told Gail, the girl at the bar, to fix him a vodka tonic and the boy a whiskey and ginger ale.

"I've not been over here very often," said the boy when the man handed him the drink.

"Do you like it on the Island?" asked the man.

"I guess so," replied the boy. The boy drank his whiskey and ginger ale quickly, and the man slid his empty glass across the bar and nodded to Gail to fill it again. The boy didn't say anything.

"You don't have to be nervous," said the man. "The natives are friendly."

"I'm not used to seeing men dance with each other," the boy said.

"Men do lots of things with each other," the man said.

When the boy finished his second drink the man suggested that they walk across the Island to a bar on the bay side. They walked silently; when they met strollers on the boardwalk the boy ducked his head. The candle on their table in the bar was in a maroon vase and the red glow warmed the color of the skin on the boy's face and the backs of his hands. The man noticed the boy's eyes darting nervously, and he didn't speak until they finished a round of drinks. Then the man began to ask the boy questions so he would talk about himself and feel more at ease. The boy had tried college, found it a rat race, dropped out, tried a couple of jobs, but the work was not stimulating or satisfying. He had discovered that society is gross and materialistic, people are greedy, obsessed with money, they are crass, crude, cold and calloused, interested only in themselves, there is little generosity, warmth and human understanding. Inspired by Seagrams 7 he eloquently recited the whole litany of complaints of the younger generation against a world it didn't make but is condemned to live in.

About two in the morning the man asked the boy if he were staying with friends. The boy said he wasn't. The man asked the boy if he had a room in the hotel. The boy said he hadn't. The man asked the boy where he would sleep. The boy said he would go back to the beach, wrap himself in his blanket and sleep on the sand. The man said it would be very cold. The boy said it would. The man asked the boy if he wanted to spend the night in the warmth of the man's room and enjoy the comfort of a bed.

"Well," replied the boy, "usually I get fifteen dollars."

## Spring Brandy

by Larry Brimner

you come to me in the quietude  
as the spring rains moisten the grounds,  
gifting the budding flowers  
with the pure nourishment of life.

before the fire and  
in the stillness of a silent Sunday,  
a gift you bring for one you love.

with a touch as warm as brandy,  
a scent as soft as a rose,  
you take me in your arms;  
your masculine strength reassures me.  
once afraid, I find courage to respond,  
to be coupled in a unique love,  
to be the man I must be.

# An Overview: Lesbian Roleism

by gingerlox

For the past five years I have been developing a personal identity as a lesbian. In trying to find my own answers, I have been in many different places within the gay subculture: creeping out of my closet in middle class mid-western Amerika-the-Crazy, marching for gay pride in Dallas, co-editing the only gay newspaper in the state of Oklahoma, observing God and gay as good with the Metropolitan Community Church, and for the past several years, moving into lesbian-feminism, meeting and corresponding with sisters nationwide.

Emotionally as well as politically my development has run the gantlet, from my first hesitant touches, through the casual sex often found available in gay bars, to a committed lesbian marriage, coming now to an attitude of openness with myself, choosing neither monogamy nor promiscuity. I am finally able to enjoy my life space without panicking if there is not someone around to help fill it. Security and happiness are NOT provided from outside sources, from physical liaisons with others, but it's been a long trek learning that. And in the process, there have been persistent questions. Some of these questions have been answered with breakthroughs in gay legislation, some by way of feminism and male-liberation, and others have become more clearly defined and answered with my own human consciousness expanding.

Several queries about the gay lifestyle continue to nag me, however, repeating themselves in my experience. I want to deal with one issue and its questions in this article: lesbian roleism. Where do roles come from? Why do we play them? What are the greater social implications of role-playing? What is the future direction of lesbian behavior concerning roles?

The perspective here is personal. I am still searching, so the article is an analytical process

that is not final, urges contribution and conclusion from the reader, offers no complete solution. I am not qualified to write a sociological lecture (nor would I want to), but as an astute observer of the two cultures I live and work in, I can share my experience in hopes that the article and reactions to it will provide some of the answers still eluding me, still out of reach of many of us.

My lesbianism is and has always been one of the foremost positive aspects of my personality, but even so, it has seemed to me that there is a "monster among the lilies" within the lesbian lifestyle. This negative force or monster emerges in the roles we often play with each other. Originally, lesbians seeking behavior models spied the heterosexual figures of husband and wife, "Mommy and Daddy." These have been ingested into the lesbian culture, emerging as "butch and femme" roles. Usually the butch is the dominant role-player, acting as an overly chivalrous male would. The femme exemplifies passivity and extreme femininity. Since the models were taken from a patriarchal system, I believe they are male-identified. While it is not my opinion that all roleisms are negative, I do believe that playing a part of fulfilling any stereotype is limiting, whether it be the role of daughter or the stereotype of dyke.

In my experience and observing my sisters, I have seen us struggling in paradoxical directions with the problems of role-playing:

(1) We are trying to break away from "acting" out a role or responding to circumstances with plastic, socially acceptable sets of behavior. Feminism has always been influential in encouraging "real-ness," the genuine (though not always welcomed) individual reaction.

(2) We are still angry with the social derision

and criticism leveled at lesbians, and often rebel by directing our behavior and energies into extreme roleism (the "tough dyke" syndrome?). Further, when we don't know how to deal with each other one-to-one, we submerge who we are in a role to evade the responsibility of being personal. More often than not, the role chosen for this evasion mocks male mannerisms. In our role, we become dominant and aggressive but not in a constructive way. Being forceful and overbearing is not limited just to men, but it is a male tactic for keeping a partner or lover at arm's length, as a protection from intimacy. When we as women exhibit this behavior, to me we're being sucked into the most negative trap of male roles: impersonalness. It is ironic and pathetic that even when we think we're close to our lovers, intimacy is the last reality involved.

However, I can empathize with the desire to be male, that is, to have the social power inherent in maleness. Men are primed to be adventurers, explorers, conquerors. Their contributions are thought to be the most dramatic, their writing the most serious. Families celebrate most the births of sons. Most rulers and seers were men. It is natural for them to be aggressive to achieve, it's part of their grooming, taught to them from childhood. Concurrently, females are taught that the men will go out, earn and explore, while we will make them a home. We are all victims of roles in childhood, but we need not be victims as adults. For a woman, there is infinitely more positive personal reinforcement to be found in womanpower and feminism, than in emulating maleness. For the lesbian, there is infinitely more opportunity for self-realization in a more feminist lifestyle than in one full of male roleisms.

Words, like tools, should be sharp for any productive labor. Before I go any further, several that I use frequently ought to be defined:

**LESBIAN:** While this would seem a word with

obvious meaning, it is often used with minimum understanding and maximum ignorance. A lesbian shall be defined here as any woman who chooses not to engage in sexual activities with men and who identifies herself as loving women. Loving women may delineate either platonic or overt sexual activities with them. This definition also includes those women who are celibate but who choose women as soul-mates or life-mates.

**MALE-IDENTIFIED:** Associative behavior, belief, attitudes, or physical appearance purposely "man-ish"; accepting abuse from men personally or socially; refusal to examine alternatives or possibilities without a man's support; the view that essential security is in a male-female relationship; tolerating the theory of male-superior, female-inferior.

**WOMAN-ORIENTED:** The feminist alternative to male identification, this option takes form in several degrees:

- (1) Lesbians who choose women as life-partners, who reject male-identified roleisms, and who either, through organized or self-evolved feminism, relate best on all levels with women are nearly completely woman-oriented. Some may exhibit hostility towards men, nurturing the eventuality of a new Amazon Nation, unmercifully matriarchal.
- (2) Those women who sexually enjoy men but who empathize with women and prefer female companions as soul-mates are woman-oriented.
- (3) Heterosexual women are woman-oriented as feminists in their discovery of their own opportunities, in their movement out from under male oppression, and in relating almost solely to other women for empathy and support in these efforts.

It must be granted that early in the gay adjustment, roleisms help locate other lesbians. But this should be just a phase—and it is dangerous because it accepts a stereotype. In a gay bar, one might be able to tell a butch from a femme by physical appearance. Not so out on the streets. The methods once used to interact among lesbians

are changing. We are becoming less reliant on a pat set of images to present to the public or to one another. It is no longer enough that a group is drawn together because they are all gay. More important human, personal elements must exist. And with legal progress concerning pro-homosexual laws in conjunction with the steps forward on the feminist front, sometime before the spectre of 1984, we will no longer have to hide lesbianism, or to masquerade as men.

While the direction away from role-playing has markedly improved in the last several years, obvious examples of male-identification in lesbian roleism can still be seen. These usually follow a format: the butch works (often at a male-identified job such as truck-driving, fork-lift operation, mechanics, welding) and the femme stays home to create a "butch castle," a sanctuary for the butch to return to from her daily bout with the real world. Because the butch provides the sole financial support, she is acting as "Husband the Provider." With the femme enacting the role of housewife, she is at home in a safe, familiar world, so the butch is also "Husband the Protector." Further, with the femme partner in the home, like many heterosexual housewives, she often seeks little to challenge her except soap-operas and connections with other "at home" femmes. She sets herself up, so that the butch's coming home from work provides her sole interest. It should be clear how exploitative dependency develops here, in this role of butch as "Husband-and-Big-Daddy."

The femme further advances the negative roleism in this kind of situation with her willingness to be utilized (probably subconsciously). She seeks few interests outside the realm of her own home or she takes on those activities which her butch most enjoys. The relationship is built on a foundation of dishonesty, cemented with a mutually perpetuated neurosis: "You take care of me and I'll take care of you, and we won't ever need anyone else, especially a man" (for after all, the roleisms have created a man of their own!). In situations such as these where the role-playing

is extensive and male-modeled, it seems to me that the roles block real communication between the women involved. This only perpetrates what I mentioned before: male roleisms keep us distant from one another, separated and impersonal even though we live together and consider ourselves intimate. Actually, only the roles achieve close interplay—often the people behind the parts do not seem to touch.

What about the unattached lesbians who are male-identified? Hairstyles, clothing, jewelry or mannerisms that are "cock," "tough," or "stud," still get attention in the social centers of gay life: the bars. Resentful of the domination of men, these lesbians demonstrate male-identified "associative physical appearance," in a futile attempt to represent strength. Bar femmes bring the vicious circle full cycle, enticing the butches, "Let me baby you, big girl! Come on up and see me sometime!" These are "chicks," with butch "rooster-ism" as the essential material of male-identified chauvinism, clearly the base of these lesbian practices. The only result of these bar roleisms is that more dishonesty results: women holding themselves back from one another, dressed in the bulky trappings of male ways. Why are we so willing to believe that we must lure our lovers by muscling their bodies and minds with pretentious caricatures of men? What is wrong with the womanway! No matter how attractive it may be to appear masculine, there is no strength in pretending what you aren't, nor in denying what you are.

Lesbian promiscuity has some origin in chauvinism: the ole lockerroom conquest count is easily seen in that bane of the lesbian experience, "one-night-stand-ing." While there are countless reasons why certain lesbians are promiscuous and some are not, one of the reasons for promiscuity points to this role-playing idea wherein it is thought that numerous varied sexual partners proves what can only be termed "butch virility." On the other side of the coin, some lesbians seek a monogamous marriage situation, not so much for its merits but because a family, a "home

base" is represented in both gay and straight cultures as the ultimate state of living to achieve, the fole of fulfilled normalcy. How many times have we all heard that old cliché, "You really ought to settle down?"

Are proud dykes and their ole ladies labeled such out of choice, or are the terms not in fact male-originated and male-oriented? In using them, particularly the word DYKE (which has come to be used as a gay pride marker), do we as lesbians succeed in our irony and satire of these labels, or do some of us use them to perpetrate the objectism of our female partners? Is dildo-ism a private personal preference or the materialization of Freud's theory of phallus-envy? (The question here does not mean I agree with Freud.) Do women in male-identified roles believe they're achieving individuality and independence, or do they really want to be male?

While I see no easy solution to alleviating role-playing in my own life or for my sisters and their lovers, I know that the heterosexual culture from whence our models come has to change. If humankind had been actively pursued throughout our history, instead of masculinity and feminity, we would not find ourselves in the roleized dilemma we frequently do now. Liberation, not just feminism, may be the answer: to be free to pursue any fulfillment without the prejudice of sexual gender, without adherence to any predetermined behavior, role, appearance, response, or reaction.

Of course within the lesbian community today, there are sisters with guts who are not involved in roleisms, who defy all restrictions to be themselves, unguilty about their lifestyle or their lovers. Persisting, however, are roleisms ingested from chauvinistic models, and these seem to be that "monster among the lilies," at least within my gay experience. Yet as I continue to observe roleized coupling among my sisters, I wonder if the monster is less a threat to a positive lesbian one-to-one dynamic than the "lily pond," the larger heterosexual culture which spawned the models for the roles. That culture is what keeps us all victims of sex role stereo-

typing. If the most hopeful direction is humanism, for lesbians and all persons wishing for liberation, then eventually we will not be under the oppression of playing any parts, acting out any roles, limited to any kind of interaction. Whether gay or straight, male or female, perhaps we will avoid the forecasts of 1984 and Future Shock, achieving in the future what Virginia Woolf suggested in the past, what lesbian-feminists are struggling with in the now: peaceful, self-liberating androgyny.

## A Saint Sebastian

by James Kirkup

The arrows skillfully avoid  
the private parts,  
go nowhere near  
the vitals or  
the heart, the lungs,  
the caratoid artery.

They casually penetrate  
the loose skin of the chest,  
the plump belly, puncture  
the forearm and the thigh,  
even transpierce  
the neck — but this is only

a kind of conjuring trick.  
—Real life, the suffering  
of martyrdom, goes on  
behind the wind-tossed  
war-bonnet of winsome tresses,  
while the mind lives out

its endless agony,  
and riyulets of blood  
serve merely to adorn  
the body of a lumpish  
adolescent — as the prudish  
wisp of muslin his thickening sex.

# Buggery in Bloomsbury

by Margaret Cruikshank

Anti-homosexual bias in literary works is likely to seem both more obvious and more offensive today than it did a few years ago. One result is that some studies published as recently as the late sixties or early seventies are outdated already. The Twayne study of Vita Sackville-West published in 1972, for example, does not deal with lesbianism, and mentions Violet Trefusis only as one of the "Bloomsberries" — a case of bias through omission. A more obvious example of critical bias is the use of the term "perversion" as a synonym for homosexuality in the 1974 Twayne study of T. H. White. We learn that White "solved his problem through drink and through a fantastically loving devotion to his setter bitch, Brownie" (p. 18). Slurs of this kind in recent criticism, which often reveal a contempt for the creative artist, are hard to reply to; but merely quoting them may heighten our awareness of academic prejudice.

Worthy of more attention than the Twayne books is a two-volume life of Lytton Strachey written by Michael Holroyd and published in 1967. The biographer's contempt for his subject, especially apparent in volume one, results in part from Strachey's homosexuality, which is treated as bizarre and pathetic. Early in the work, when he offers a strained interpretation of some juvenalia dealing with sex, Holroyd quotes a spirited rebuttal from Lytton's brother James. But then James Strachey adds "I wonder why on earth you ever set out to write this book," (I, 138). Readers are

likely to ask the same question, since Holroyd clearly does not see Strachey as an attractive subject.

Holroyd's homophobia is evident not only in specific passages, two of which are quoted below, but in the tone of the book: the freakishness of Lytton Strachey is continually stressed. In volume one, subtitled *The Unknown Years*, for example, we are told repeatedly that Strachey looked odd. Yet in the pictures accompanying the text he looks rather handsome. The series of affairs which Strachey had with young men from Cambridge are treated by Holroyd not with outright scorn and moralizing but with a condescension which is somehow worse. In volume two, however, *The Years of Achievement*, a warmer view of Strachey appears: he is occasionally made to seem admirable and even lovable; perhaps his success prompts Holroyd to treat him more favorably. In any case, frequent quotations from letters allow Strachey to appeal directly to the reader, without the biographer's distorting lens.

Even though Holroyd is less hostile to Strachey in volume two than in volume one, his study raises the question of a biographer's choice of subject: if he or she is basically unsympathetic to a writer or public figure, should a biography even be attempted? For Lytton Strachey himself and the irreverent, ironical work which made him famous, *Eminent Victorians*, the answer is yes, because his special insight into Victorian pre-

tentiousness and hypocrisy illuminates the whole age. In the 1930's, when anti-Victorian attitudes were still in vogue, R.C. Beatty wrote an unsympathetic life of Macaulay which all the reviewers thought fair because they shared the author's biases. More recently, John Clive has shown in his monumental work *Macaulay: the Shaping of the Historian* that a biographer can be essentially approving of his subject and at the same time be detached in his judgments. Clive's success with Macaulay when compared to Holroyd's difficulties with Strachey suggests that a biographer must feel some kinship with the chosen subject to write convincingly.

The following passages show Holroyd's disparaging view of Strachey. In comparing Strachey to Oscar Wilde, for example, he says, "In both cases their homosexuality was tied to an exaggerated self-preoccupation which, with its accompanying passion for the applause of others, acted as the limiting factor in their creative output" (I, 201). Any human being, any creative writer or artist can of course be taxed with "self-preoccupation." That this quality is specially connected to homosexuality is an assumption resting on ignorance. And the conclusion that the self-absorption supposedly typical of homosexuals limited the creativity of the two writers is nonsense; but it is a reassuringly familiar and ego-boosting thesis for the critic, who can merely state it and forget the evidence that is usually thought necessary for large generalizations. Holroyd assures us that both Wilde and Strachey had "strangely divided natures," another judgment which reveals more about critical bias than about the individuality or personality of the writers.

Other fallacies about homosexuals are set forth in a longer passage:

Since the way to heterosexual happiness was blocked, he (Strachey) naturally returned for his most satisfactory love-affairs to the adolescent period of his life, so that the character of all his infatuations . . . remained to a large extent permanent, static. Because the

very core of his homosexual affection was imbedded in a sense of unsureness and was, in effect, a natural regression to the sunlit days of his youth, there could obviously be little real chance of a ripening development in these affairs, except in the realm of fantasy. Yet they were not all identical. With a common emotional pattern there was room for a surprising variation of feeling (II, 544). Here we are reminded that 1) homosexuals suffer from arrested development; 2) homosexual love is therefore immature; and 3) homosexuals suffer from "unsureness." With his viewpoint constricted by these assumptions, the biographer cannot avoid a condescending tone when he deals with Strachey's emotional involvements. Word choice uncovers Holroyd's bias when he tells us that in Strachey's life there was "room for a surprising variation of feeling." Variation of feeling can be assumed in heterosexual relationships but is "surprising" when one stumbles across it in homosexuals. The naivete of the observation and the arrogance are equally striking.

Seeing Strachey as a representative homosexual and seeing him through a fog of prejudice, the biographer is unable to account for Strachey's uniqueness. Similarly, the unusual relationship between Dora Carrington and Strachey is rather insensitively handled, although it is thoroughly chronicled. Part of the trouble is that Holroyd, like other academic biographers, includes great quantities of information which, after a time and in the absence of interpretative passages, become meaningless and repetitious. The European trips Strachey took with Carrington are relentlessly documented, but one feels that the complexities of their friendship (which ended only with Strachey's death) are not taken seriously enough by the author.

This is also the case with Virginia Woolf, who was close to Strachey for many years and wrote often to him. Academics have been satisfied with a stereotyped view of Woolf — she was frail, sexless, and nasty to her friends — but the new popularity of her writings caused by the feminist

revival has challenged this view of her, shedding light on her vigor, her toughness, and the intensity of her feelings. In Holroyd's book, however, Woolf is a remote and strange figure rather than an appealing human being. Perhaps a biographer able to treat Lytton Strachey with complete fairness will also create life-like portraits of Carrington and Woolf.

The biographer of the future might well pursue the critical path opened up by Carolyn Heilbrun's book *Toward A Recognition of Androgyny*. Heilbrun makes many astute remarks about Strachey, noting for example that the target of his satire in *Eminent Victorians* is not merely complacency but a patriarchal system. She also points out that Holroyd in analyzing Strachey's *Elizabeth and Essex*, stresses the difference between the masculine Elizabeth and the feminine Strachey. But Heilbrun concludes that it would be far more

fruitful to stress their similarities.

A biographer who carefully studied the androgynous qualities of Strachey would not be able to emphasize the oddness of his homosexuality. Such a biographer might escape the conclusion that homosexuality was a regrettable fact of the writer's life. But as Weinberg says in *Society and the Healthy Homosexual*, "unwarranted distress over homosexuality is not classified as a problem because it is still a majority point of view." Holroyd's bias will not generally be seen as a problem in his approach to Strachey because most of his readers will share his negative attitude towards homosexuality and not object to the condescending view of Strachey which results from it. But we in the minority can assert that the definitive biography of Lytton Strachey has not yet appeared, and that it will have to be written by a person free of homophobia.

## Homosexual/Love

by David Russell

*cocksucking faggots  
motherfucking queers  
they oughta put 'em all  
on a boat and blow it up*

*delicate and slender  
the fine slope of your nose,  
southpaw hand writes on  
against all odds*

*rip strips of skin  
off their cocks  
and rub gasoline in  
with stiff wire brushes*

*why try to describe  
the perfect curve of your buttocks  
or the beautiful impertinence  
of the bulge in your levi's?*

*fat flabby asses  
full of warm mushy shit—  
their clammy flesh  
disgusts me*

*exquisite flash  
of brilliant white teeth—  
your eyes  
burn holes in me*

# A Saintly Gay or a Gay Saint?

by Martin Smith

Is homosexuality incompatible with deep spirituality? Could a homosexual be canonized—knowingly—by the Church? At this juncture, let us ask: "Since when has sanctity been a matter of temperament? Since when are the robust, insensitive, healthy temperaments an exclusive seed-ground for sanctity?" Surely sanctity consists in merit, and merit depends upon what one does with one's temperament under the influence of grace, not upon any natural qualities. In this article we shall look at the life of a well-known Catholic, who may be canonized, a homosexual: Cardinal John Henry Newman—theologian, historian, master of prose style.

\* \* \* \* \*

Reports from Rome earlier this year revealed that we could shortly expect Cardinal Newman's canonization<sup>1</sup> and, in this era of gay (and human) liberation, it would appear appropriate to do so; Catholic homosexuals could have, with St. John Henry Newman, their own patron saint.

We are aware that the sexologist Magnus Hirshfeld lists Newman in his *Homosexualitat* (1920) as being a homosexual and H. Montgomery Hyde claims "Newman, who figures prominently in the homosexual Strachey's *Eminent Victorians* . . . possibly of the sublimated (homosexual) type"<sup>2</sup> but for serious historians and intellectually honest people, more evidence than that is required before one can justifiably claim Newman was a homosexual.

Newman was a homosexual, albeit in later life celibate, and there is ample evidence of this,

most of it from his writings, writings for obvious reasons rarely published; the documents used by the Devil's Advocate in Newman's cause would indeed be worth getting one's hands onto.

John Henry Newman was born in Old Broad Street, London, on February 21, 1801, the first-born of a banker. Like many Londoners, Newman, though born in the centre of the metropolis, had roots in the country; indeed beyond it. His father, John Newman, came of Cambridgeshire stock that had settled in London only a generation before. His mother, Jemima Fourdriner, was descended from some Huguenots who had taken refuge in London on the revocation of the Edict of Nantes. At the age of six Newman was sent to a private school at Ealing, where he was to remain until December 1816. From Ealing he passed straight on to university, so that he never had any experience of life at a Public School.

But before going to Oxford, let us realize that about his relationships with other children we know little; about his school friendships, nothing at all, not even whether he had any worth mentioning. Just before leaving for university came what Newman never ceased to regard as the undoubted turning point of his career—his conversion in 1816 to evangelical Anglicanism. Prior to this he had "no formed religious convictions."<sup>3</sup> A letter from that period has Newman saying, "I was terrified at the heavy hand of God which came down upon me,"<sup>4</sup> which cryptic as it is, could indeed be a sense of guilt for homosexuality. But even more telling was the evangelical Anglican's decision, made at the age of 15: "I am obliged to mention, though I do it with great reluctance, another deep imagination, which at this time, the autumn of 1816, took possession of me,—there can be no mistake about fact; viz. that it would be the Will of God that I should lead a single life."<sup>5</sup> Telling because, firstly, celibacy was (and is) not only frowned upon in evangelical circles but discouraged; secondly, it raises the question of whether young Newman sensed his homosexuality (and lack of attraction to the opposite sex) and therefore had no interest in mar-

riage; and, thirdly, almost incomprehensible when we realize how important sex is to a person in his or her early teens.

Students of Newman will not be misled by the brevity of Newman's statement; the connection between his idea about celibacy and his conversion is, as Louis Bouyer notes, "obvious, and the importance of its bearing on his subsequent spiritual evolution needs no emphasising."<sup>6</sup> Exactly. Sublimation of homosexuality; intensification of spirituality. I believe that biographers in the past have not attempted to plumb the depths of Newman's psyche.

No sooner had Newman finished his schooling at Ealing than his father decided to send him to Oxford University, and he became a student at Oxford in 1817, when we find Newman writing to a friend: "The beginnings of sin are small, and is it not better, say, to be too cautious than too negligent? Besides, I know myself in some things better than you do; I have hidden faults, and if you knew them, so serious a protest would not appear to you strange . . ."<sup>7</sup>

June 13, 1824 saw Newman receiving his Deacon's orders and assisting at St. Clement's, Oxford, and the letters to the handful of friends (mostly to people older than himself and Anglican clergymen) he wrote during and after his first step up the ecclesiastical ladder must be read in the original and not in the published volumes entitled *Letters*. The editor, Anne Mozley, took out what she didn't like. As this writer has found, and Bouyer confirms: "When she encountered anything which she considered struck too personal a note, Anne Mozley was not sparing with the scissors."<sup>8</sup> As an example, when quoting from his diary,<sup>9</sup> she deletes this sentence: "I'm deeply interested in his views, the views of the youth whom I love so much and am so anxious about" and then continues to quote from the entry. Why the deletion? If Newman was gay, then this line is significant, but if he wasn't then why did Ms. Mozley delete it? The youth, as far as this writer can ascertain, was one of several private students Newman tutored to provide him with extra money.

Which one I'm not sure.

On April 4, 1823, a man entered Newman's life --Edward Bouverie Pusey--when he took up a Fellowship at Oriel with Newman. He was a year older than Newman, and immediately attracted Newman to him; his diary is full, at that time, of entries involving Pusey--walks, talks, religious arguments, and swapping secrets, for his entry of March 15, 1824 reads: "We went along the Lower London Road, crossed to Cowlwy, and, coming back, just before we arrived at Magdalen Bridge turnpike, he expressed to me . . ." At this point Newman suppresses what he himself considered an over-intimate confidence, then goes on to say: "Oh, what words shall I use. My heart is full . . ." The remainder of the entry being a litany of praise to Pusey, it is clear that (though Ms. Mozley preferred to delete such entries from her tome) Newman was in love with Pusey. Was the "expressed to me . . ." the fact that Pusey had told Newman how he felt, which was the same as Newman? Events answer that, for Pusey was a High Churchman, Newman still an evangelical.

Another fact from that period of Newman's life has been neglected or edited out by past biographers and that is, as his father described it in a letter (hitherto unpublished) to him, Newman's "too many visits to the humble young male members"<sup>10</sup> of his flock. His father describes this as "painfully at variance with the reserve expected of every decent Englishman." Shades of statements made by Carson (and others) during the Wilde trials. Apparently, John Henry Newman liked, as did Oscar Wilde, "rough trade." Not uncommon among people of their social caste and temperament.

May 28, 1828 saw Newman ordained to the Anglican priesthood and settling down to be devoted curate to the people who were (or thought they were) the parishioners at St. Clement's as well as curate to his preferred "humble young male members." Two new Fellows had been elected to Oriel, both of them former pupils of Keble. One was Robert Isaac Wilberforce, the other Richard Hurrell Froude. As Bouyer says:

"Little did Newman foresee . . . the influences which the second of the two was to exert upon him in after years."<sup>11</sup> They were lovers from the moment they met until, eleven years later, Froude died.

Froude was two years Newman's junior, and, as portraits show, tall, fair-haired and "radiant in his good looks, a strange compound of merriment and dignity, of hauteur and warm-heartedness."<sup>12</sup> He was the son of an Anglican archdeacon, belonging to an old family of well-to-do Londoners, a way-and-out Tory and High Churchman; somehow Newman (a fact ignored by previous biographers) swung between "rough trade" for bed and High Churchmen for love.

Newman described Froude further as being "fond of sport but simple, even austere, in his habits; of brilliant intellectual endowments but wholly free of self-conceit, his tenderness of heart was equalled only by his dislikes of any visible display of the emotions."<sup>13</sup> How effusive can you get?

Despite the apparent differences between Newman and Froude, Froude discovered in Newman (and Newman in Froude) precisely the same desire, the same endeavour to understand and gain the affection of young people, to be "as a father to them."<sup>14</sup> Despite the opportunities and temptations to discuss Newman's emotional and physical involvements with males other than Froude, we'll look only at the love *affaire* between John and Richard (and later John and Ambrose), an *affaire* which lasted eleven years: John, the cold, precise scholar; Richard, one who would "enunciate the most startling propositions couched in students' slang uttered in the lordliest of tones."<sup>15</sup> Richard had a reputation at Oriel for helping men to climb the wall when they got back later after being with him at some boating or skating party.<sup>16</sup>

The whole John-Richard *affaire* was deleted from his autobiographical memoir, but thanks to research by Mlle. Tardival this has now been restored and, as Bouyer says: "The whole *affaire* affected Newman to an extent, and with psycho-

logical intensity, out of all proportion . . . Newman could not get the affair out of his mind; it is abundantly clear that it was always haunting his resolutions."<sup>17</sup>

At this time (February 1829), as the *affaire* deepened, Newman wrote in the manuscript draft, but it didn't appear in the published version, or the *Apologia*: "I have had the continuous will and resolution, with divine aid, to live and die single. I determined to be 'a pilgrim pale with Paul's stern girdle bound'." This writer has carefully examined all the extant memoranda relating to the month of February, in the hope of discovering something that would help to explain Newman's reasons for suppressing this passage, but all that was found was a number of particulars about the Peel *affaire*. As Bouyer asks, in his work, on another matter: "Are we to take it from that, that there was a strong line of demarcation dividing his inward life from his ordinary day-to-day existence?"<sup>18</sup> The answer is, of course, in the affirmative and the unpublished letters and journal extracts made this clear; his homosexuality (though, of course, he didn't call it that, since the word wasn't coined until later in the century) "troubled" him. For an example of how biographers in the past have handled the Newman-Froude *affaire* let us look at Bouyer's work, and Bouyer is indeed the frankest on the matter. Says he: "Froude had a remarkable and very natural charm for all who were not scared, or offended, by the sort of *enfante terrible* ways he adopted, and this soon brought him very close to Newman." The operative words in that extract are, of course, "very close." Bouyer continues: "The two soon came together in a harmony destined never to be marred. These holidays of the year 1831 served to deepen and expand a friendship that was already far beyond its apprenticeship stage."<sup>19</sup> Bouyer (who clearly lets the cat out of the bag in the just-quoted passages) is a priest of the Oratory whose book has been described as "in a way more complete than any other"<sup>20</sup> (about Newman) and "easily read and fascinating in its accuracy"<sup>21</sup> so we are using

authentic material and not scandal when we quote from Bouyer's book.

To read between the lines of Bouyer's tome, and the unpublished letters and journal entries surrounding the vacation Froude and Newman spent together in 1831, is to catch a clear vision of two lovers happy with one another and the world around them. As Newman comments on the "friendship" to his mother at the time: "This consciousness keeps me very silent, for I feel I am admiring what everyone knows, and it is foolish to observe upon."<sup>22</sup>

The following year Newman went on a long voyage in the Mediterranean with the person Newman's sister Harriet called "the bright and beautiful Froude," and, when writing of that holiday, Bouyer has great difficulty in answering the question he asks himself and his readers: "What was the real significance of this friendship which certainly affected Newman more markedly?"<sup>23</sup> Difficulty because he avoids using the words "love" and "homosexual."

A little-known fact is that, on July 25, 1831, a meeting to form what we know as the Oxford Movement was held at the Parsonage at Hadleigh of Rev. H. J. Rose. Attending were William Palmer of Worcester College; Perceval, a Fellow of All Souls and a former pupil of Froude's; Palmer, the learned author of *Origines Liturgicae*, Froude, and Newman. "Froude scandalised Palmer"<sup>24</sup> as Bouyer described it, but, as unpublished letters reveal,<sup>25</sup> what happened was that Froude camped it up and flirted outrageously with his former pupil, Perceval. Bouyer continues, still not revealing all the facts, that "Froude came away from Hadleigh with the desperate feeling that he had behaved like a great child; that no one had taken him seriously." As we know, once the Oxford Movement was formed, Froude was compelled (according to biographers) to drop out because of poor health. (But was it that?) He went to Barbados, where he was appointed professor of theology in the Anglican seminary. In 1836 he came home and a few weeks later, at Dartington, he died. Was he exiled by

powerful church and political forces because of his open homosexuality? Will we ever know? And how much was the evangelical Newman influenced (because of the love between them) by Froude, the High Churchman, in heading spiritually Rome-wards?

Newman and Keble shortly after Froude's death concerted together to publish his *Remains*. Of these there were four volumes. The first two, which came out in 1838, were amply sufficient, as Bouyer says, "to provoke an extraordinary uproar, which the two that followed did nothing to mitigate."<sup>26</sup> The Diary, which is the most notable part of the *Remains*, is primarily the record of perpetual mortification (masochism or self hate?) of the flesh and endless searchings of conscience, conscience searching about homosexuality while not naming it because it had no clear name then.

Froude was replaced in Newman's affections by Ambrose St. John, at whose bier Newman "broke down and wept like a child"<sup>27</sup> and who was Newman's "dearest companion, friend and disciple in one, whose filial devotion and lavish affection were the best of human consolations amid the many trials he had to suffer, (and who) was one to whom he always referred as 'my dear Ambrose St. John'."<sup>28</sup> Ambrose was one of the small band of friends present when Newman was received into the Catholic Church on October 11, 1845 by the Italian Passionist, Father Dominic Berberi.<sup>29</sup> Ambrose had been received into the Church before Newman, and though biographers in the past have not said it, it is clear Newman's love for Ambrose (and Ambrose's for him) had a lot to do with his conversion, as love between Newman and Froude had a great deal to do with Newman's conversion from Evangelical to High Churchman.

But Newman's conversion to Catholicism does not stop him from writing, in a letter to Henry Wilberforce, on February 26, 1846: "Carissime—I write my first letter from my new home to you . . . I love (Ambrose) St. John so much because he comes from your teaching. Oh that he

might be a pledge to me that you are yourself..."<sup>30</sup> At that time Newman had moved to Old Oscott, where he established a monastical centre shortly before being joined by Ambrose, who wrote of the building as "strikingly like the Sandford paper mills."<sup>31</sup> Ambrose and Newman not only joined the Roman Catholic Church together but also entered the Order of St. Philip, the Oratorians, at the same time; they literally travelled to Rome together in September 1846, on the election of the new Pope, for St. John was, as Bouyer puts it, "to remain his (Newman's) bosom friend and support till an untimely death removed him."<sup>32</sup>

After Ambrose's death, Newman could write what only can be described as verbal flirtations to young and attractive novices at the Oratory, as Wilfrid Ward reports and quotes the case of the note Newman wrote Phillip Gordon, saying: "Many is the time I have stood over the fire at breakfast and looked at you at recreation, hunting for something to talk about. The song says "love cannot live on flowers"; not so, yet it requires material, if not substance, at least for display . . ."<sup>33</sup>

Ambrose St. John died in 1875. It was William Paine Neville who succeeded him as Newman's secretary, right-hand-man, and, "to some extent, his confidant, Newman being at this time quite an old man."<sup>34</sup> Newman had received Neville into the Church at Leeds in April 1851 and was later to become Newman's literary executor; on him fell the task of collecting all Newman's letters and papers. It is interesting to note that, at the end of his life, Newman wrote: "I have closed this history of myself . . . and offer it (as) a memorial of affection and gratitude to Ambrose St. John, Henry Austin Mills, Henry Bittleston, Edward Caswell, William Paine Neville, and Henry Ignatius Dudley Ryder—who have been so faithful to me; who have been so sensitive to my needs; who have been so indulgent to my feelings; who have carried me through so many trials; who have grudged me no sacrifice, if I asked for it . . . and to you especially dear Ambrose St.

John; whom God gave me when he took everyone else away; who are the link between my old life and my new; who have now for twenty-one years been so devoted to me, so patient, so zealous, so tender; who have let me lean so hard upon you; who have watched me so narrowly; who have never thought of yourself, if I was in question...".<sup>35</sup> Those named in the document (and surely it's significant that Newman placed no women in the list, neither his mother nor his sisters) were men with whom, to say the least, Newman was more than friendly.

Newman died in August 1890 and rests in the same grave in which, "with such heartbreakng sorrow" he had seen his "beloved St. John laid to rest."<sup>36</sup>

As we know, the highest Catholic prelate in England during Newman's lifetime was Cardinal Manning, who so violently opposed Newman's elevation to the College of Cardinals. There is a strong possibility that Manning knew of Newman's homosexuality and it was the basis of his antagonism towards Newman's elevation. Possibly documents exist in the Vatican Library (letters to the Pope from Manning, for instance) which would confirm this suspicion.

In conclusion, when doing research at the British Museum, London, years ago on another matter, this writer came across a note from Oscar Wilde to the artist William Rothenstein, which did not, at the time, have significance, but now does. It was dated April, 1877: "Today have been to see Father Newman. Dunske took me. A sparrow of a man is Newman but sharp and saintly. I'd heard talk he was a devotee of Greek Love but now I know. We chatted about Oxford and other matters."<sup>37</sup> "Dunske" apparently<sup>38</sup> was David Hunter Blair, who was a convert to Catholicism and afterwards Abbot of Fort Augustus. "He encouraged Oscar's interest in the idea of conversion (to Roman Catholicism) at that time, and persuaded him to hear Cardinal Manning and seek an interview with Newman, but achieved no more."<sup>39</sup>

The note I discovered in the British Museum

not only shows that Wilde and Newman met but also, as far as Wilde was concerned, Newman was, as the phrase for homosexuality was at that time, "a devotee of Greek Love."

So the question now is not whether Cardinal John Henry Newman was a homosexual, but whether he was a homosexual saint or saintly homosexual.

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## The Crux

### of the Matter

by David Russell

I cannot tell you  
how inane  
sexual attraction is.

When was the last time you read a gay comedy?  
Huh?



About Daniel Curzon's first novel:

"'Something You Do in the Dark' ought to be taught in a Gay Studies class — because it is a real novel, not a political tract. It deals convincingly and powerfully with the persecution of a minority, but it tells the story of an individual, not a representative martyr. Its hero is torn between rebellion and cowardice, love and rage; he is never too noble to be true. I greatly admire Daniel Curzon for writing this book."

—Christopher Isherwood

"Powerful and engrossing!"

—Walter Allen  
author of "The English Novel"

"A masterpiece!"

—Milwaukee Journal

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# from the letters of

## Amanda Reckonwith

### (letter to Gladys Canby)

by Gerard Brissette

At home/SF  
May 20, 1975

My dearest,

Yes, yes, I agree. I, too, find it rather disconcerting that Governor Brown recently received a deluge of letters urging him NOT to sign the Consenting Adults Bill. As I understand, at one point, only fourteen correspondents urged his signature compared with 2,591 against, and a tally of telephone calls showed the same startling ratio: fourteen for and 470 opposed. I catch a note of bitterness when you wonder whether the two fourteens were the same persons.

What is happening here? Some have said that State Senator H. L. Richardson, the principal opponent of the Bill, sicked his constituents from Arcadia on the Governor by readings from Leviticus on the Senate floor, and that this was a clue to the church groups in Southern California to mount a massive campaign of protest against the Bill.

No, my dear, I do not think that the gays of San Francisco (and California in general) were so busy tricking that they had no time to write letters for . . .

Dearest, do you remember Autumn Leaves, that little band of Sappho's followers who gathered together in Seattle way back in 1947? We were such ninnies then. So fearful. We thought no one would dream that a club called Autumn Leaves was really a bunch of horny dykes. "Coming to Autumn Leaves, hon?" we'd ask a fellow Leaver in the student cafeteria. And out loud, too? Never caring who heard. Confident in our shared, deep secret. Proud that we were lesbians who could

join together like Amazons to struggle for our mutual self-respect and freedom. We were young and terribly idealistic then, weren't we?

But you know, my dear, we were right. Autumn Leaves might sound a little corny today, but we were on the right track. I remember it was you who named it that, wasn't it? Because the song was so popular then and you went ga-ga over Yves Montand singing it:

The autumn leaves  
Fall past my window . . .

Sounds a bit like *mal de siecle*, doesn't it? Woeful, barely hoping against impossible odds, somewhat febrile, consumptive. Poor autumn leaves!

The other day I happened to visit a group of older gays here in San Francisco. I couldn't believe my eyes. All the members were so sweet to one another, so reasonable, so gentle. Graciously they embraced, kissed, and even openly fondled one another. It was like a dream.

Don't forget that we were in Europe during that Stonewall thing—during all of the Sixties, in fact. We've both been keenly aware of the great progress made by the movement during our long absence and, since our return to this country, have noticed the great changes which have taken place in the last ten years or so. But at the moment I speak of, I began to see these changes in a different context.

It was like a dream. For a little while, I was lulled by it. Then I began to recollect about Autumn Leaves. God, how we fought in those days! Against the world and against each other! We were a hapless bunch, you must admit. Bitter

over the inhuman treatment we had had to endure under the heels of stupid parents, cruel husbands, nasty-minded teachers, Irish priests, snoopy neighbors, and meat-head cops. We were off on a grand and glorious adventure to change the world. But success came slow and progress was hard. Good God, after a while we would have given anything to melt down one hardened heart in any home in the land, on the floor of any legislature anywhere! Just one! One nod of acknowledgement! One vote for dear humanity's sake!

And how we resented the politicians who told us that one day they would give us our rights (if we behaved ourselves). As if they had it in their power to ever give us anything we knew we already had—by the grace of God! The cheek of those bastards!

Anyway, after I sat for a while, I said softly to myself, almost automatically, like to a sleep-walker: "These are my children." I said it slowly. And a great blessing came down on me then, like rain, so great that I began to weep.

O, the tears and the years we spent together to raise ourselves out of the shitty preceptions people had of us—about this awful "abnormality," this loathsome "perversion!" We half-believed it ourselves, but something in us said NO and NO and, again, NO! We knew we weren't sick. We knew that we, too, were children of God.

But how all the "experts" frightened the day-lights out of us, how we clutched at their fuzzy statistics of "cures," bewildered by their prognoses that we were damned to miserable lives as monsters, women with the minds and bodies of men, men with the minds and bodies of women, freaks in some sanitorium, picking at our scabs, whining endlessly to our doctors and nurses, who smiled all right but who really thought we were BUGS!

O, how we wrote and preached and begged and scared and sent off reports to each other in triplicate, warning frightened politicians that we were at the command of a huge bloc of gay votes, whispering to policemen who would listen that we had built up an enormous dossier on their crimes

of entrapment, appearing on Paul Coates' scandal show with brown paper bags over our heads! How we lionized that poor boy who worked in the aircraft factory and who had the temerity to appear on that damned show without the paper bag! (He lost his job, you remember.) How proud we were of Dale What-Was-His-Name, who won the first entrapment case against the L.A. police! We weren't happy gay corpses then!

We were an aroused Minority by then and we went back to our meetings, amazed at our little successes. But that didn't stop us from scratching each other's eyes out in internecine battles over silly parliamentary procedures, screaming out: "Point of order! Point of order! just like that Joe McCarthy whom we hated so. We must have been very unpleasant people then. How often we wanted to chuck it all up and fall back, exhausted and resigned, muttering that maybe the "experts" were right after all—maybe we were genetic sports, inbred neurasthenics, hopelessly consigned to the back wards to stew in our thin juices! Maybe we had best sit in our Well of Loneliness and cry the blues up the hole to any poor kid who dared to listen and cry out: "Hey, there's somebody down there!"

"These are my children." The words come to me again. Yes, dear Jesus, they are—in ways that most of them would probably never understand. Right before my very eyes—what we had prayed for for so long, so hard that we are almost numb now, is alive and moving and loving and caressing and tasting on each other's lips the sweet dew of their freedom!

No, we didn't fail, Gladys. We were on the right track after all. Twenty-five years ago. The major battle then was too obsessed with legality, I thought, and so we left the movement. Sure, we said, let's hire a lobbyist and get them to change those goddamned laws up there in the Capitol, but there's so much more work to be done! What in hell will a change in the laws do—ease some rich queen's conscience in Laguna Beach! Changing the laws will take years and look at what we've got on our hands now—confused, sick, lonely, scared

kids who need nurturance, support, strength, all the fiery spirit we have achieved in our own search for freedom! What are we going to do for *them—now!* How are we going to free them from obsession, compulsion, self-hatred, hopeless fantasies, cruel fetishisms! What are we going to do about changing the QUALITY of Gay Life now, while the need is so great?

But, as you recall, such pleas seemed to fall on deaf ears. The movement seemed to pass into the hands of young men who thought that if they could get the laws changed, they could walk away from it all, decriminalized citizens, free to live in their privacy as they so chose. *That* they thought would be the end of it. Let's just get those laws changed. The rest will take care of itself.

Well, here it is—1975—and Jerry Brown at last signs a bill. I am pleased. It's right, the way it should be, the way it always should have been.

But looking around that room and seeing those lovely men and women—the ones who have survived, who didn't burn out along the way, dying off with drink or pills, heart-sick, beaten, bitter, and confused—the dear, sweet ones we have lost, my dear (O, how I weep for them!), I saw and felt something that Jerry Brown could never give me. No politician. Or no priest or preacher either. Only what these, my own children, living and dead, can now give to me. Only these, whom I have the well-earned right to call—my very own.

As ever,  
AMANDA

## Alexander and Hephestion

by Rolf Karlsson

Blazing banners, red flares  
against the blue of Persia's sky;  
rumbling echoes on the hills  
repeal the rolling drums,  
swords beat on shields  
hammer a clangor of blooded steel,  
and silver tumult of trumpets  
in rampages of exaltation.  
Phalanx on Phalanx,  
the lances of Macedon, erect,  
present a salute of courage  
proud and Greek;  
Medes, forehead to the dust,  
nameless thousands in battalions,  
plead Asia's adoration.  
Through the armies,  
rank by rank,  
Alexander slowly rides,  
gold spikes of crown imperial  
impale and flaunt  
the golden rays of sun,  
accepts awe owed to him

as prince, and king,  
and king of kings, and deity.

Night quenches parade and pomp,  
and in a young captain's tent  
fitful lamplight flickers  
on the sovereign god-in-man  
kneeling naked on the earth  
to offer with a kiss  
worship to his lover's cock.  
Hephestion bends,  
untangles from the curls  
the glittering wreath,  
sacred circle  
no other mortal dares to touch,  
claims empire and divinity,  
and raises into the embrace  
of his tall, tough body  
a trembling youth;  
eager in flesh  
to be his warrior's boy,  
hungry in spirit  
to receive his hero's soul.

# All Expenses Paid

by William McLeod

I was bumbling around the produce counter in a supermarket in Paris when I heard a voice behind me say in a goddamn Texas accent, "Scuse me. Can you speak Amurican?" I certainly could, much better than I could speak French. I turned to see a large, stately old gentleman with a full head of silky silver hair. He was lost trying to find the Listerine, so I took him across the street to a *pharmacie* and he took me to his hotel room for a drink. After we had had dinner that night at the chic flat of some former Franco-American diplomat friend of his, he asked if I wanted to go to Vienna. I did.

Back at my hotel room I found my roommate, a fellow Sorbonne student from California, and said, "Alors, I'm going to Austria for a few days with what has to be one of the most literary accountants in Dallas. Picked me up in the *supermarché*. Gotta take what you can get . . ." The taxi arrived early in the morning. We flew to Munich.

Who was John-Richard Hawthorne, this loud, pushy, chatty Texan? He wasn't exactly bright, but he tried. He carried a copy of *The New Yorker*, and I imagined *Paris Reviews* sitting around his house in Dallas as pure affectation. He was that kind of person. Mostly he loved to gossip. I had no idea how well I would get to know Jean Daniels and Ruthadele and that senile Mary Carter-Smith who wore thousands of dollars worth of diamonds around the house and never went out anywhere. John-Richard, as he liked to be called, liked to talk seriously about my education and future plans and during obligatory spurts of intellectualism we would discuss the likes of Tennessee Williams, Truman Capote and (save us all!) Faulkner.

But he didn't talk about his own plans. I was

quite surprised when we were met at the airport by two American soldiers. They were friendly enough but were playing it very straight and macho. I couldn't figure out what was going on. We drove into Munich and checked into a small but luxurious hotel. I noticed that the deskman, dressed as if for a funeral, penciled his eyebrows — very strange. One of the soldiers said goodbye, and the rest of us went to a beer hall for lunch, me in my Parisian revolutionary student costume, a guy in full Army drag and a fifty-year-old man impeccably dressed in a Pierre Cardin blazer with a bright red tie. I took advantage of the situation and got quite drunk, which only added to the conspicuousness of our group. Afterwards I claimed to have a headache, hoping to gain a little free time that afternoon, but things didn't quite work out as planned, and the situation turned from silly to absurd after we all went back to the hotel "to lie down." I pretend to be asleep while a Texas accountant gets fucked by a horny G.I. on the next bed.

Two days later my gentleman friend and I toolled out of Munich in a rented Mercedes-Benz. I became strangely affected by the growing beauty of the countryside as we headed for Austria. I was picking up strong symbols from the forces at work flashing to me the message of the day: "Something interesting. (flash!) Not far off. (flash!) Keep your hat on." Spent that night in a fine old inn near Salzburg, in what the tourist board billed as "the Sound of Music country." The next day something did happen.

\* \* \* \* \*

Now the road to Vienna is filled with many fine and glorious sights. The best I saw, however, was

a blond hitchhiker—shorts, tee-shirt, backpack—with a smile that would melt a banker's stony heart.

"Well, stop and pick him up, ferchrissakes," demanded the squint-eyed Southerner.

I pulled over onto the gravel and came to a skidding stop. He ran up to the car and jumped into the back seat saying, "Hallo, uh, English?"

"Americans," I said, tearing back onto the highway. He had the nerve to put painfully engaging blue eyes right in my rear-view mirror.

He asked, "Are you going to Vienna?"

"We sure are—what's your name?" piped in John-Richard.

"Michel. I'm from Angers in France. Er, you know the Loire Valley?"

"Yay-ess, Ah was there three years ago. Had a *marvelous* time, a right pretty place."

And this was one hell of a right pretty kid, too. Couldn't have been more than eighteen, but he seemed to catch on to what the scene was in the car almost intuitively—an older man with a younger guy; he must have read about such things. He would rarely let me catch his eye in the mirror. John-Richard asked where he was going, what he was doing.

"I just finished school, er, Lycee, you know? And I am starting at the university in Lyon in October and so I just wanted to travel a little, maybe go down to Trieste and into Yugoslavia, I don't know."

"How old are you?" The old guy just couldn't wait to find out how young a treasure he had in his rented car.

"Seventeen. How old are you?"

"Oh, now . . .," droned John-Richard.

"*J'habite a Paris*," I said quickly changing the subject.

"Ah, bon. Qu'est ce que tu fait la?"

I could see the displeasure rising in John-Richard's eyes so I replied in English, "Studying French, of course, and not doing too well either."

"But you speak well, no? You just need practice."

"Later," I said.

We drove and talked and got to know each other. John-Richard couldn't have been more interested. Michel was amazingly learned. Spoke four languages, graduated at the top of his class, was an all-around perceptive beauty.

Lunch was the only stop we made before reaching Vienna at rush hour. The traffic was hell and we had trouble finding a hotel but finally settled for a small room in an old place near some cathedral. I really did have a headache then. Viennese drivers see to it that either you or your car or both are wrecked by the end of the daily ordeal. I had a sandwich, a couple of beers and lots of aspirin at the hotel before passing out, leaving Michel and John-Richard to fend for themselves on the streets. By morning it seemed that the two of them had come to some sort of tacit understanding regarding sex, and Michel indicated as much to me after breakfast while John-Richard enquired about some tours. John-Richard hadn't attacked yet, and the three of us got along relatively well for the next three days. Michel's presence also kept John-Richard off my back (or wherever). We went to Shoenburg Palace and tripped out on the history of the Hapsburgs, about which Michel was enchantingly well informed. John-Richard, with indefatigable Texas balls, pushed and pushed to get three tickets to a sold-out *Die Fledermaus* at the incredible State Opera House. Once again, fortunately, Michel was able to fill us in since I don't (didn't) know a damn thing about opera. John-Richard saw that we were well over-fed during our stay in Vienna. These days, however, were not without tension between the members of this unlikely trio, not the least of which was the deafening attraction I felt for Michel.

On the fourth day we leisurely headed back towards Salzburg, where Michel would catch a train for Innsbruck and Venice. We arrived in the late afternoon and while strolling down a shopping street after dinner we became engaged in a casual conversation with a gay man from Chicago, and we all went to a cafe for a drink. The talk was pleasant at first, but ended in dis-

aster. Somehow the question of John-Richard's age came up and I giggled to Michel in French, "The old bag is fifty-one." Not that he understood, of course, but John-Richard became livid anyway.

"Shut the fuck up!" he screamed, exposing, to say the least, an underlying strain that had more behind it than just age.

I just got up and walked out, but hadn't gotten very far in the street before John-Richard came up behind me and half-apologetically gave me explicit instructions about what I was to do that night: go back to the hotel and sleep—in the small cot in the corner, leaving the large bed for most likely a persistent Texan and a liquor-plied seventeen-year-old French Adonis.

I was awakened by their arguing about six A.M.—it was barely light outside. Michel was dressed and packed and ready to leave. The old man had advanced too far and the kid just couldn't handle it.

"What about all the money I've spent on you? Don't you think you owe me something? You're just like the rest of them—just out for what they can get." John-Richard was furious.

Michel was frightened and repulsed. "I don't owe you anything. You are sick." With that he took five hundred schillings out of his wallet, most of what he had left, and threw them on the desk. He grabbed his pack, his camera fell out, he scooped it up, stumbled to the door and slammed it behind him. John-Richard gave me a grave look and after a minute said sternly, heading for the door, "I'm going down to have a cup of coffee—and a Bloody Mary, if they know how to make one in this goddamn country."

"Be right down," I said. I surveyed the empty room and evaluated my half-asleep emotions—both were in shambles. I acted instantly without thinking. I gathered my things, put on my coat, swept the five hundred schillings off the desk and took three hundred more from John-Richard's checkbook. I ran down the staircase, through the lobby and into the street. Michel was walking about two blocks away. I ran up to him and said,

"Quick, there's not much time. He'll know we're gone in a matter of minutes. Let's get the fuck out of here." I shoved the money into his hand—he was grateful. We had to run, Salzburg is too small to hide in. Our only chance was to get a ride out of there before John-Richard came after us. We raced around a corner to the main drag that led out of town to the autobahn. Once there, we frantically begged drivers to stop, and finally a small pick-up truck pulled over. We clambered into the cab and found that the guy was going all the way to Munich. Great! We sat there close to each other, panting, relieved, excited, exhausted. We drove onto the autobahn. I had just turned to Michel to begin to laugh over the situation when he whirled around in his seat to look behind us. "*Merde!*" he shouted. My heart sank. We had been spotted! The Mercedes was right behind us. We ducked but it was no good, he had seen us! He pulled alongside the truck honking his horn and yelling something we couldn't hear at all. I think I saw the face of a man who could kill. The poor truck driver was appropriately freaked out and was only too happy to oblige when Michel shouted, "Stop quick! Let us out!" We scrambled down the bank of the freeway as John-Richard came to a screeching stop and jumped out of his car, running after us, demanding that we come back right then or he would call the police.

We ran into the fields, ran and ran, over a creek, through a thick brush, into a forest. We just kept running. John-Richard's screams faded. I imagined that enormous silver-haired Texas homophile stalking the Austrian countryside like some rampaging executive cowboy without his gun. We finally dropped our things and collapsed in someone's hayfield. My sides ached from running. We heaved the air in silence, our eyes meeting briefly at first, then for longer intervals; there was some laughter. I hugged him and that seemed to be all right. We were drenched in sweat. Insects buzzed around us. I kissed his wet neck, his chin, his lips. His kiss was warm and open, not at all awkward. He

pushed me away, giggling, feigning exhaustion. I think he slept. We lay there for hours. The sun moved half way across the sky and then Michel said to me, "Let's go."

We walked back into Salzburg late in the afternoon and had a huge meal. He got on the train for Innsbruck—he would look me up sometime. I got on what passes these days for the Orient Express to Paris. The ride through the lightless night was long and unreal with the hypnotic variances of clickity-clack, clack, clack. I thought of Michel and his shaken sensibilities. I suddenly felt deeply for John-Richard, imagining him at that mo-

ment having a fabulous meal with a newspaper for company. I wandered through the sleeping train, caught some German's eye and made it with him in the lavatory. I went back to my seat and curled up. Tears filled my eyes and began to roll down my cheeks. My face filled my hands. I slept.

The train arrived early in the morning. God, it was great to be back in Paris. The sun was out, the air was crisp. I rushed to the nearest cafe and had six cups of espresso, beaming at the beautiful city passing before me, watching it beam back at me, one of the great cities of infinite possibility.

# dear destiny

by Norman Lubowsky

unclaimed the boy tackled his history  
(a major in romantic usery)  
worn around his neck in simulated angst.

flashback: perjured in the dark  
labyrinths of movie palace haunts  
resigned like gloria graham getting jilted  
by richard widmark in "the cobweb"  
(mgm salutes freud, fantasia & the h-bomb family fall-out)  
seeing it twice for the coming attractions alone,  
trailing lullabies of kodaked-colored stars  
and kitsch campaigns of innuendoes  
wide screen charisma unconsciously editing my dreams,  
whatever happened to 20th century fox  
and feudalism, darryl f. zanuck  
the robe & stereophony sound.

flashback: i perpetrated cheap sentiment  
on the pages of grade school propaganda  
(supermarket assignments for home room consumption),  
while the crash course schoolyard credit  
lay hidden in our pegged pants & earth angel dresses  
bubble-gum throbbing  
"why do fools fall in love?"

with our bodies "at the hop"  
and our hit parade allowances  
we worshipped pizza plaza parks of juke box drop-outs,  
lindy-feet stomping out the rites  
of mid-century affluence in "silhouette,"  
bobbing our soon-to-be officially shrunken heads  
in payola of popular fads  
(first on our block obsolescence);

we'd outgrown recess milk & cookies  
for a smoke in the john and more dirty stories about . . .  
arlene in her tight sweaters  
never making it home after school.

flashback: a sissy from the start  
i dressed in grandma's hand-me-down robes of curtain & quilt,  
a chubby-cheeked jew boy tv dancing  
for his grand duchess jewess sage  
3rd floor black ghetto tenement live  
and in living colored brownsville.

flashback: 8th grade lloyd and i once jerked each other off  
after school in my father's favorite chair  
watching the 3:30 soap opera,  
door-bell ringing just as we came  
knowing it was lloyd's father picking him up,  
hurrying to the bathroom with our pants & hands  
and cocks sticky soap-white  
flushed by the heat of our hormones  
hollering at the front door menace  
stalling moments of panic,  
pretending that lloyd was vomiting  
and i was playing boy scout doctor,

finally opening the door having wiped ourselves of sin  
they left as father & son  
leaving a secret behind  
and i thought about how sweet i felt  
first coming  
with lloyd's hand on my cock,  
hoping it would happen again  
i jerked myself off on dad's favorite chair.

excerpt from  
FREE-BOX CONFESSIONS OF A CLOSET  
LOTUS EATER

# Ocean Walk

by Perry Brass

When I arrived on the island Thursday night, Erroll and Wes were already engaged in their room on the second floor. The scent of amyl nitrite had spread so thick, one grew an erection just walking through the house. I heard several deep groans and wondered how many people were in there cavorting with them. Despite these constant extra-curricular activities, they managed to keep their relationship alive while I preferred to stay alone but uninvolved. "Some people," I explained to Erroll, "don't mate as easily as others."

Wes, however, figured that no one else was good enough for me. "Human life is too frail a thing to judge so harshly," he declared thoughtfully one night. And perhaps he was right. I was too impatient.

I found the room they saved for me. It was Dick's, the hairdresser from New Jersey who never used it until Sunday nights. I took off my tie, shirt, and pants, and slipped on a bathing suit and tee shirt. Still such nice legs, I thought to myself, catching a glimpse of me in the full-length mirror inside the door.

It was already 11:00. I thought about popping into their room for a moment to see what all the excitement was about. I closed the door to Dick's room and tiptoed over to theirs. "NOW! NOW!" some one screamed behind the door. If it was ending, it would be like catching an Alfred Hitchcock movie in the last reel. Who needed that? I decided to just wait and then see the players trot out in their various beach costumes.

I was suddenly hit by fatigue and worry about my job.

Tomorrow Ruth, my secretary who was two years younger, would cover for me. Beame would probably do away with my job any week now. I

should expect a memo on Monday, my boss, Gwen, told me. The thought of it scared the shit out of me. Ruth could stay, a minority hiring practice would protect her, but I, at twenty-seven, had never been fired. I am one of those overeducated, underskilled, nervous, insecure New Yorkers who think that Sundays mean *The Times*; camping out means staying at a Holiday Inn, making coffee on one of those "complimentary coffee warmers" that come with the room. Maybe no one needed libraries anymore or needed planners to make purchases for them like I did. My parents had warned me in college. "They don't read nowadays. They all watch TV," my father said, switching channels, but I read, always did.

I went downstairs, made myself a gin-and-tonic with some flat tonic from the refrigerator and suddenly understood that I was on Fire Island and not in the steam room of some bath house. I took my drink out to the back deck. A colossal, bewitching half-moon was sailing over the ocean, a pale floss beyond the sand. I looked at it for a moment; I was seeing only the part lit by the moon. The dark edge lapping the shore had simply vanished. A mosquito decided to get his chops into me. I swatted hard at him, but accustomed as he was to assassins, he got away. I decided that there would be more breeze and fewer insects closer to the beach and took the walk that led down from our house, ending abruptly several feet over the sand. There the boards escaped the full fury of the waves in winter when the sea didn't have to behave itself for the summer residents.

I sat down at the end of the walk and let my legs dangle over. My tiredness and anxiety fore-saw some romantic possibilities. If I were

canned, I would spend a month out here, read things I had put off for years, try to write. And end up, I knew, getting drunk, stoned, and numbed by it all.

I wandered around that thought until I was suddenly jerked awake. A hand grabbed my leg. It could have been a crab, but crabs didn't usually jump that high. The hand ran its fingers up, stretching into an arm, revealing part of a head and a shoulder from the darkness under the walk. There were plenty of fiddler crabs under there, and I wondered why anyone would want to be under the walk when he could sit on top of it.

He looked at me straight in the face as I leaned over kneading jokingly at his hand. A tanned face — some color of eyes lighter than black, whites the white of Ivory Snow, teeth, beach white — smiled at me. I stretched my back, craning towards him as we became a sort of tinkertoy animal. He held onto my legs; I pulled on his arms at the same time. The harder I tried, the more he laughed.

Finally I said, "You don't look like a crab."

"What the hell did you say?" he asked.

"I said you don't look like a crab."

"Why the hell should I? Why should I ever look like a crab?"

"Well, it's just that mostly . . ." I tried to explain they lived under the walks, but gave up. "What were you doing under there anyway?"

"I was just walking along the beach and I saw some one coming down the walk. I wondered what it would be like to listen. Sometimes people say strange things to themselves out here. But to tell you the truth, I'm not sure exactly what I was doing down there."

"Then why don't you come up here?"

With one jump, he sprang up, using his forearms and elbows, and managed to get on to the walk. I tried to help him, but he really didn't need it. He was a wiry man about my age. His grin was infectious.

"What's your name?" he asked me, in an accent slightly Southern or Southwestern.

"Mark," I answered. Excited and shy at the same time, I hoped he would volunteer his name to me.

"Mine's Walter. I'm glad to meet you. You just got here, didn't you?"

"I did. Just a few minutes ago. Like some gin-and-tonic?" I knew I sounded nervous and tired. I was usually nervous meeting people.

He took the glass I offered, drank some of it, then put it down. He sat, his knees drawn up to his chin, his face pointed towards the ocean.

"It's so beautiful here," he said. "I wish the world would just stop here."

I threw my head back. I didn't expect him to say something quite simple and poetic like that.

"I can't imagine it," I said.

"It's a funny thing to say, but every time I come out here, I feel like Balboa."

"Balboa?"

"He discovered the Pacific. Can you imagine discovering a whole ocean? But I feel like him, like I'm in some place no one else has ever been. I only feel like that at night. In the daytime it's too crowded. I like the ocean at night. I was born at least a thousand miles away from one. I guess I feel like I'm discovering it when I come here."

"That's a nice feeling," I said, leaning back on my elbows and watching the stars twinkling ahead of me.

If I were fired, I thought, how could I live on unemployment insurance? I owed what seemed like a fortune: a new sectional "grouping" in white texturized, spill-proof fabric; a bicycle hardly used, the witness to one of my physical fitness jags. I could ride my bike a lot more and learn how to play handball at the Y. I'm afraid I got lost for a moment. He was so quiet I forgot he was sitting there, but just the thought of some beautiful, strange creature popping out of the space under the dark walk was very nice. I listened to him breathe. I closed my eyes. He was a breathing box; a sea animal; a man. I opened my eyes. Now he was a neck; a back; a small ass. I simply wanted to touch him. If he went away, if he disappeared, he would be no

more to miss than a dream. My hand reached under his tee shirt. His back was tight-muscled and supple to my touch. I love silky bodies. Skin is a secret weakness.

His back relaxed; his breathing became almost purring. I drew closer to him and lifting his tee shirt, ran my tongue across the width of his back, a few inches below his shoulder blades.

It was a quick gesture, startlingly intimate and satisfying to me. He reached back and found my other hand. He held it for a second.

"Why did you come out here?" he asked.

"I need to relax. I think I'm going to get fired next week. Part of Beame's budget cuts."

"Oh, I'm truly sorry."

"I like the way you talk," I said. I suddenly felt good, a great smile touched my whole body.

"Thank you. Some of these guys out here think I'm a hick. I guess I might be. After all, I came out here to escape."

"To escape?"

"Yeh. To escape. I've been traveling around a lot. In the service. I didn't get out like so many guys in New York did."

I understood what he meant.

"And . . . I've seen a lot of shit. Too much shit. I was in Asia and I helped those people escape, packed like monkeys aboard paper ships and rafts. Escape . . . to God knows where. So I had to get out. One of my buddies in the service told me about this place. I found a share in a house in the Grove, down there a way." His face collapsed, saddened; he added, "They think I'm crazy down there. Maybe I am."

And if, I thought, I have to live on unemployment, I'll have to give up some things — shopping at Bloomingdales, soap from Caswell-Massey. I could get a job under the table, maybe be a waiter. I realized I had hardly heard a thing he was saying. He was sad. He shouldn't be. The bottom wasn't falling out of his life. If he was no longer in the service, he'd be free now.

"But you're free now," I said. "You're no longer in the service."

"Yep." He nodded his head. "And the country's off to the dogs. In a few years I'll even think that this place was all a joke."

I understood that, about the Pines being a joke. It did take itself too seriously. In the Grove there wasn't much to take seriously. Maybe the Grove would have the last laugh.

I wanted to hold this man who had made me feel warm and happy. I realized it and smiled. I felt pulled back together again. He was right, in a couple of years everything would be a joke. I started to put my arms around him, around his shoulders. I wanted to bury my lips in the back of his neck. My lips were cold; his neck would be warm and delicious. I heard a noise.

It was Erroll walking down the ramp, looking tipsy. Too much booze and poppers; one of these days they were going to kill him, I knew it. He looked over at me, but I could tell that he couldn't make me out. He had probably forgotten his contacts.

"Mark, is that you, old fart!"

I turned towards him and slipped my arms away from the man sitting next to me.

"Yeh, Erroll, it's me!" I shouted back.

Erroll walked uneasily over towards me, almost falling into the dunes several times. To regain his balance, he waved his arms into the air like a flightless bird trying to get off the ground.

At thirty-three he was looking a little tubby but certainly lovable. "Over here!" I called. "At the end of the walk. Down near the water."

"Oh, there," he said, the riddle solved. "Where the hell have you been? Should have waked us. We were just napping, you know?"

"You and how many others?" I asked as he came within a few feet.

"Just us . . . just us." He smiled a huge, crazy smile at me. "Whatcha doin', sittin' here all alone?"

"Alone?" I asked. I turned around to introduce Walter to him, but the place next to me was as empty as it had been when I first sat down. I looked back in the direction of the Grove. A slight

sliver of a figure zipped its way into the darkness. The night became misty, obscuring the moon and Walter, too.

"Yes, alone," Erroll contended. "Gosh, honey, you're getting to be as soty as we are." He knelt down and gave me a wet, whiskered, kiss, buttery with bourbon and grass.

"I'm glad to see you've been enjoying yourself, Erroll."

"I have been, I have been. I HAVE been. Oh, yes, Mark, you should get 'married.' Settle down. Find yourself some beau or boy friend."

"Oh—God—Erroll," I said, hugging him for a second like a blond teddy bear, feeling a moment of loss.

"Don't stay out here. It's getting too wet. Come on back to the house. I'll make some cof-

fee."

I got up with him and we went back to the house. I decided not to let anything bother me again. Erroll and Wes wanted me to sleep in their big bed. But I just wanted to sleep by myself. And I did.

A few days later I saw Walter at "tea dance," the cocktails affair in the Pines at the Botel. I was with Erroll and several other people. We were getting ready for dinner. He was with other people also, walking the other way. He looked back at me and smiled. If this was going to be a big joke in a couple of years, let it be a light one, I said to myself, without worries or difficulties, with only kind memories; and that's how I remembered him, as he walked off in the opposite direction.

## And There Were Leaves Blowing

He caught me looking at the bulge in his pants, and grinned. I used to look only at eyes. But then, Louis Brown, on the Lower East Side of New York, taught me about seeing what showed thru along the side of a man's fly, and I began noticing that, too. Sometimes I'd look at his eyes, then at his crotch, and I'd get confused as to which was saying Yes or No; I mean, *really* Yes or really No. Sometimes the other fellow would be confused, too: his eyes would put me off, but his body said *Come on*, and then I'd have to figure how to get *him* together so that we could get together without a hassle.

Anyway, this fellow knew the score, I could tell, by the way he grinned. Then he out and asked me if he could come up to my apartment, and I said, *Sure*, even though I hadn't made up my own mind yet whether I really wanted anything with him right then. We got to my place, and I locked the door behind us. The room was still dark. He asked, *Where's the light switch? Here*, I said, and I reached for him, touched him in the loins, easy, so he could tell I wasn't trying to hurt him, then pulled him to me and kissed him. Mouth and crotch made for electric between us. *That will bring a high bill from the power company*, he said, filling the dark with his grin. I put my hands on him. *It makes this bill big*, I said. Then he felt me, *You, too, I see*. I laughed. *Who needs lights with all these watts?* He opened his pants, just stood there with it out. I couldn't see anything, but he put my hand on it, then pressed my head with his other hand till I knelt down on the hard linoleum in front of him. He ran the tip of it across my lips and it was wet, so I licked the tip, and he gave a kind of joyful low breathcatch. My knees were already

## Along the Sidewalk . . . .

hurting. Then he grabbed my head with his hands, I did what I was supposed to do — started work. It wasn't much fun like that. I had wanted to lie beside him, look at his face in the shadows, touch him, hold him. Suddenly I pushed my head back against his hands and let him fall out of my mouth. *Say, what's — don't stop now, Man, I'm about to come, hey!* I stood up. *I'm not a thing,* I said. *Shit,* he said, breathing hard, *You're nothing. Nothing!* He pushed me. I opened the door. He stood there blinking and glaring at me in the hall light. *I'm sorry,* I said, *but I just — goodbye.* *You wanted me to fuck you,* he said. *No,* I said, *just be close. Close? How close can we get?* He still stood there. *Did you think this was all I wanted?* he asked. *I just figured by your eyes we could do it like this, free and all, then go lie down close and warm and — aw hell.* *You just ain't cool, man.* I sighed and, I guess, shrugged. But then he pushed the door back to. Reached for me. I was limp all over, but he pulled me to him and kissed me like a lover, then laid his head against mine. *I'm going to leave now, but, if it happens again between us, don't be like this.* Ever, he said. I didn't say anything. I'd killed it. What could I do? Drag him on back to bed then? I was too sad to try to prove anything. I just let him go, and the stairs in the apartment building climbed with the sound of his footsteps all the way down to the basement of my soul. I ran to the front of my apartment and looked out the window down into the street, and there were leaves blowing along the sidewalk like hands trying to grab onto something, just anything at all.

from

# Daddy the Fag

by Karl Keller

God is a black hole in the universe pulling all life and light into itself.

Jeff is coming over tonight and I will suck his cock until my mouth is bloody and will work my fist far into his asshole until he is bloody and we will fall asleep in streaks of our blood and shit and it will be morning.

I must not expect my children to understand this.

I am no longer dying. I will have centuries of beauty in a few years of age.

This is not a recording. It is my own voice.

I lie with my wife in bed, my back to her, she holds me, and her fingers move as she sleeps. She sleeps a lot and her fingers move or she rubs one foot against the other. She sleeps a lot and I do not know if she is alive. I cannot find out if she is alive.

She found out I am gay just before Christmas last year but she did not cry. I had been fucking around with guys for a year and a half and I guess it was about time she found out. We agreed not to talk about it in detail — who I fuck, where I go, what I do. She sleeps a lot.

If Jeff will not move in with me next week I will

go back to San Diego to live at the end of the summer. He just turned 20 and I am 41 and I think I am in love with him. I met him at a parking spot near the top of a hill on Bee Rock Road in Griffith Park. He was standing smoking a joint, with his hand on his crotch, against the LA skyline. I pulled up alongside his VW, got out, and asked him if he liked the sky, asked him if he wanted to fuck in the bushes or drive to my place in Pasadena, asked him why he was beautiful. When he left me six hours later I asked him his name. He kissed me until he was too late to cash his check.

In God the black hole I cannot find any heart.

I fistfucked a guy one night in a bathhouse in LA. He was goodlooking and had gentle gestures. I eyed his eyes for signs. In a room he pulled my hand to his asshole without a word and pushed my fingers and arm into him smoothly all the way to my elbow. I felt my two fingers on the underside of his heart. From the amyl our hearts were beating hard and fast together. I had driven to the core and watched his face, sun and steel, as he churned his muscle against my arm and then pushed it out. I smelled musk oil afterwards and lay in his arms for a long time.

Kris is going to Berkeley in the fall and will read my books on early America. She will then know I wrote as a corpse, as a fake. Maybe after several years she and the four boys will read this. I guess I write this for them.

I am destructive, have aura, endure. I am not without resources. I feel 20 and think I know what I am doing, but try not to be too analytical of the butterfly in me. It flies among flowers sucking in the sun, indifferent to its end.

Jeff tells me he has never read a book all the way through in his life. He will never read this one. I have felt his heart with my tongue in the hair on his chest. And then it was fast when he kissed me.

This anomaly, this Creation, has me as its example, its representative.

I danced with Jeff at the Cabaret until totally played out on Friday night. The music was a heartpacer. I laughed through all the sweat and beer, and Jeff had to carry me to the car. I climbed in his window when I went to his apartment with him so the neighbors wouldn't see me. After we fucked he fell asleep close by my face and I watched him the rest of the night. I don't know if it will last any more nights. Why is everything anomalous?

Kris is in Utah for the summer with a grocery store job and can't see my exhilaration. I could dance for her and for the boys and perhaps they would understand that my blood begins again.

A day now is things dancing before my eyes — everything moved and moving.

Hustle, hassle, and heartbreak — paradigm of the universe.

Goddammit, Robbie, I love you. What am I supposed to do about that?

I was shouting it outside the restaurant, grabbing him by both arms.

Jeff didn't call any more. I could rarely find him at his apartment in Glendale and got the look of a stranger when I finally did. Back off, back up, go back, go.

You're a dirty old man, Robbie told me, but I like your mind.

My mind? Anybody can like that. I want someone to love my whole self. Everybody is tearing me apart, using this fragment of me or that one. But I am learning to pull it all together to love the whole person, to be myself wholly/holy/holey. That includes my body loving your body, Robbie.

I know.

Oh, I see.

Robbie was a student at Cal State LA and I was fascinated with him from the time I saw him at a table next to mine at a cafeteria in South Pasadena. Tall, 19, profuse blond hair and beard, dark eyes, precise speech, an idea every minute, sexual puns even faster, resolute, a spiritualist, tuned body. A seeker — what I was and am.

Robbie, what am I supposed to do about that, I yelled at him.

He waited until after we ate to tell me I was repulsive.

For three weeks he gave me a spark for getting through the day. For three weeks I saw him almost every day and the cheer was overwhelming. I am repulsive and still I love him. Am I lost?

I drive to San Diego to see my kids, feeling wan and thin and old. The sky as I drive is a black hole. I am defeated and want to be alone.

The arrogance in me: I have a lot to give somebody. I tried to give it all to you, Robbie, and it was too much, or too little. Will you ever call again so I can find out which? Perhaps I went too far. I'm sorry.

Is fucking what I do because I don't know where I came from nor why and don't know where I'm going nor why? That's too grand. Yet I write in heat and find that it is true.

Robbie, I am repulsive and I love you. Loving you is not repulsive. Repulsive is if I failed to be able to love you, if I couldn't find it possible, if there wasn't anybody to love.

We spend hours together almost every day and I don't get him in bed. In bed my hands would tell him more.

My silence at home with my family has all this in it. Still it is silence, a veto, a hole.

My wife asks me not to write about her. I write about the black hole.

Jack's hands roll over the keyboard at 2 AM in a music I never thought possible and his paintings are enormous and red.

I met him in a bar on Santa Monica Blvd. Our eyes became inseparable, as did my mouth, later, to his, and as my hands did, still later, to

his cock and asshole.

The movement of part to curve and need to hole was a work of art equal to the music and the painting: we added to the creation by our fucking.

My mouth warm in his asshole, his finger trying my cockhole, my span of fingers stretching balls, his cock swinging, his face a gaping transfiguration breathing the Holy Spirit on my ass — ass is holy and we awoke near noon to jack off on each other's cock.

Jamie was molested, almost molested, in a park in San Diego when his mother wasn't watching, but got away and shook for hours. He is eight, I will not let him be baptized in the church, I tell him to beware of everybody until older, he asks his mother if he has diseases and if God let it happen, I tell him about dirty old men, some of them.

I will hang Jack's painting near the fireplace at home after I see him tomorrow. It is moving red and blistered black. Blood comes between my wife and me. I feel my hands on Jack as I drive back to LA. My hands have him in them as I go.

# The Boy from Dayton

by El Gilbert

I have to find someone, he said. I shouldn't be alone at my age. I'm getting too old.

(He from flipping through *Viva* magazine looking at the ads.)

I know, I said. Who wants to be alone.

(He had nothing on but his T-shirt and hockey socks. His balls looked like two soft rocks.)

You don't really think he's going to divorce his wife, do you—not after 15 years of marriage?

No, I said.

(The nude in last month's *Viva* was a poolhall owner right out of middle america.)

I laughed, he said, and told him I deserved better than a Jew.

A lot of people from Ohio married Jews in New York, though, I said.

But don't you see, he protested—all's he's after is my body.

(The magazines fell off the coffee table and the cat sat on them.)

He doesn't love me, he mumbled.

Yes, I said. I think you may be right.

And his wife, he said—don't you think she's a Jew bitch?

(The super knocked on the door with the morning mail and a brand new *Viva*.)

No one gives a damn, I said.

I flipped through *Viva* to the centerfold. Fuck.

You see how it is, he went on.

(He stood there pulling his T-shirt down over his cock and looked very tired.)

Being a New York trick for a Jersey Jew isn't enough, he said.

I know, I said. You're too fair.

## Things that Give Rise to Male Homosexuality

by Eldon E. Murray

Cloisters  
Oysters  
Christianity and  
Knighthood.  
Sensitivity  
Underwear  
Creativity  
Kisses.  
Earthworms  
Rutabagas and  
Sibling rivalry.

# REVIEW

by Daniel Curzon

## THE MISADVENTURES OF TIM McPICK

By Daniel Curzon  
The John Parke Custis Press  
c/o English Dept.  
CSUF  
Fresno, Ca. 93740 \$3.50

Daniel Curzon has written a rare thing indeed, a gay comedy. Gay comedies, all will admit, are few and far between. I wouldn't say that **THE MISADVENTURES OF TIM McPICK**, however, is exactly lighthearted. It's got too much satiric bite in it for that label. But somehow the overall impression is one of good humor, but a good humor won with the knowledge that tragedy is never far away from comedy.

The hero, Tim McPick, fits into a long literary tradition of picaros, or rogue heroes, and Curzon evidently thinks a seventeen-year-old homosexual on the run from the psychiatric profession and the U.S. Army is an appropriate character to continue this tradition. I think he's probably right.

Some of the scenes that remain in my mind, after reading this sparkling novel, are the chase through the sewers, reminiscent of a similar chase in Hugo's *Les Miserables*; the Republic National Convention, where a dummy becomes candidate for President; and the snakebite scene in Death Valley near the end of the book. I found them all quite funny, and wish I'd written them myself.

When was the last time you read a gay comedy? Perhaps this is the book for you. It instructs and amuses, but not in quite the way the eighteenth century meant. Or the nineteenth or twentieth for that matter.

# Review

by Kris Mazure

**The Butterscotch Prince**, by Richard Hall, Pyramid \$1.25

*The Butterscotch Prince* is an exciting and fast-moving addition to suspense literature and a strongly relevant and realistic gay story. It is set in New York City in a wild variety of settings that underscore the New York lifestyle.

Cord, the central character, has his lifestyle abruptly changed by the seemingly senseless murder of his closest friend, Ellison. He is pulled into a search for the killer by his closeness to Ellison and by the lack of police interest in the murder of just "another queer." Cord's search alienates him from his friends and brings him into contact with other gay people who are amusing, pathetic, and sometimes frightening.

Mr. Hall has created an exciting mixture of emotionalism and realism in the situations Cord encounters in his attempt to solve Ellison's death. He deals honestly with race, sex, and gay liberation from the point of view of his characters but yet does not let these concepts slow the action of the story. Richard Hall's style is a refreshing and welcome change from many unrealistic attempts in the past to portray the homosexual culture and mind in a mystery setting.

# Review

by Daniel Curzon

## THE HOMOSEXUAL MATRIX by C. A. Tripp,

McGraw-Hill, \$10.00

C. A. Tripp's **THE HOMOSEXUAL MATRIX** is a fine book. It's always hard to know why one likes a book—I mean *really*, despite the reasons we offer out loud—but probably agreement with the arguments within the book helps a great deal.

I like this book because it says many things I think are true. In particular it stresses the biological, or hereditary, underpinnings of sexual attitudes and actions. As you may know, this idea is decidedly unfashionable, since everybody seems insistent on blaming social training for everything. Tripp, however, says that many women have a low libido, men a high one. How outrageous! Tripp also says that sexual attraction thrives on tension, not compatibility, and this is, nowadays, almost a heresy. Perhaps Tripp's book is an indication of a swing away from a belief in environment to a belief in heredity. (No doubt we'll swing back again in a few years.)

Although **THE HOMOSEXUAL MATRIX** is usually well documented, there are places where the author's assertions, even though I happen to approve of them, are not documented. They should be. For instance, he says (p.99) that Billy the Kid and Wyatt Earp and various cowboys were homosexuals. Hearsay is not proof. In another place (p. 164) the author says that lesbian couples usually stop having sex with each other in two or three years. This is such a surprising statement, going against widely held notions to such a major extent, that it clearly deserves some statistical verification.

But my quibbles are just that. The book is an important one, and says many wise things about promiscuity (without the sanctimoniousness about monogamy that I hear so often even in gay circles), about how a strong focus in a person's

life acts as a bulwark against unhappiness and setbacks, (certainly the gay liberation movement is this focus for many gays in our time), about the advantages of having gay diplomats, about why "masculine" men dislike effeminate ones. There's even a section on the benefits of homosexuality to society. That is, variety is good for all of us. It keeps society from being hard, narrow, and stagnant. The author doesn't feel he must overly justify gay persons; he's not strident. That's a sign of confidence, I think.

I commend Mr. Tripp for his important book.

# Review

by Daniel Curzon

**The Abandoned Labyrinth**, by Stephen Boswell  
\$5.00 The John Parke Custis Press  
875 Fifth Ave.  
Los Angeles, Ca. 90005

Stephen Boswell has written a small volume of quiet poems. They are really quite nice. Their effortlessness is what shows through most, it seems to me. The poet writes about a scarecrow, or two lovers holding hands, and the reader feels no strain in the presentation, no harshness, and yet the poems are definitely poems, poems of delicacy and grace, if not passion. Is this the British in the author? Perhaps.

The other quality that stands out is the good-heartedness of the poet. He seems almost devoid of poetic ago or petulance. Instead, he expresses his joy over many of the experiences that escape the rest of us. As for the homosexual loves expressed in the poems, there seems to be little turmoil in the poet in living with himself or his loved ones. These are poems of quiet celebration rather than angry or rhapsodizing poems. The reader may find comfort therein.

Here is a sample:

Horsehair and catgut  
Tug at a tune  
Leaving my heart  
To find its own way  
Through memory's abandoned  
Labyrinth  
Eyes blind to all  
But the simple glory  
Of a line of melody

# Fags

by David Russell

Fags wear  
digital  
watches

# ★ CONTRIBUTORS ★

PERRY BRASS appears in THE MALE MUSE and ANGELS OF THE LYRE, two gay poetry anthologies. He works, as much as he can, in New York as a freelance writer.

LARRY BRIMNER teaches high school in a desert community in California.

GERARD BRISSETTE has published novels, monographs, and poetry. He is married, a father, and one of the founders of the Mattachine Society.

J. D. BUTKIE is working on a Master of Fine Arts degree, in Wichita. His chapbook, PAINLESS SURGERY, is available now.

MARGARET CRUIKSHANK is director of Women's Studies at a college in Minnesota. Her study of Victorian historian Thomas Macaulay will be published by Twayne.

DANIEL CURZON is the author of THE MISADVENTURES OF TIM McPICK, a gay comedy, maybe even "a satiric romp." He lives in California, where he'd like to stay.

N. A. DIAMAN has published in THE GAY LIBERATION BOOK, FAG RAG, GAY SUNSHINE, RADICAL THERAPY, and ZYGOTE. He lives in San Francisco.

EL GILBERT has published in MOUTH OF THE DRAGON, lives in Tennessee now.

gingerlox, no relation to Goldie, has published poetry in LESBIANS SPEAK OUT and WHISPERS OF MAN and is an active member of Denver's Lesbian Task Force.

WILL INMAN has been poet-in-residence at American University in Washington and appears in the current anthology FOR NERUDA, FOR CHILE (Beacon Press, 1975).

ROLF JARLSSON lives in New York and has written a number of stories and vignettes about Fire Island, "before the Long Island developers devour it."

KARL KELLER teaches in California, is an early American literature scholar.

JAMES KIRKUP is a widely published British poet, now teaching for a year in Ohio.

NORMAN LUBOWSKY, of San Francisco, has published in MOUTH OF THE DRAGON and read his work on KQED's "Three Gay Poets" and also on KPFA's "Fruitpunch."

WILLIAM McLEOD has lived in Paris, London, Honolulu, and Japan. At one time he was a contributing editor to AFTER DARK.

KRIS MAZURE worked in a bookstore in San Francisco for several years; he's now going to school to become a male nurse.

RUSTY MORRIS, a former actor, works for the SEXUAL LAW REPORTER and is available for free-lance photography.

ELDON E. MURRAY is the editor of Milwaukee's GPU NEWS, and former stock broker.

L. A. RITTER (correction of information in Issue 4) is a woman, not a man, and lives in Alaska, not Alabama.

WILLIAM ALAN ROBINSON is a former Catholic monk, now working on a Master's degree in Niagara, New York.

DAVID RUSSELL shares a two-room closet in Pittsburgh with the inflamed lining of his stomach, with which he is attempting to establish a truce satisfactory to both parties.

MARTIN SMITH, now recovering from a recent heart attack, writes for THE ADVOCATE and is connected with the University of Sydney.

STEPHEN WRIGHT, who lives in The Big Apple, is working on a non-fiction book at present.



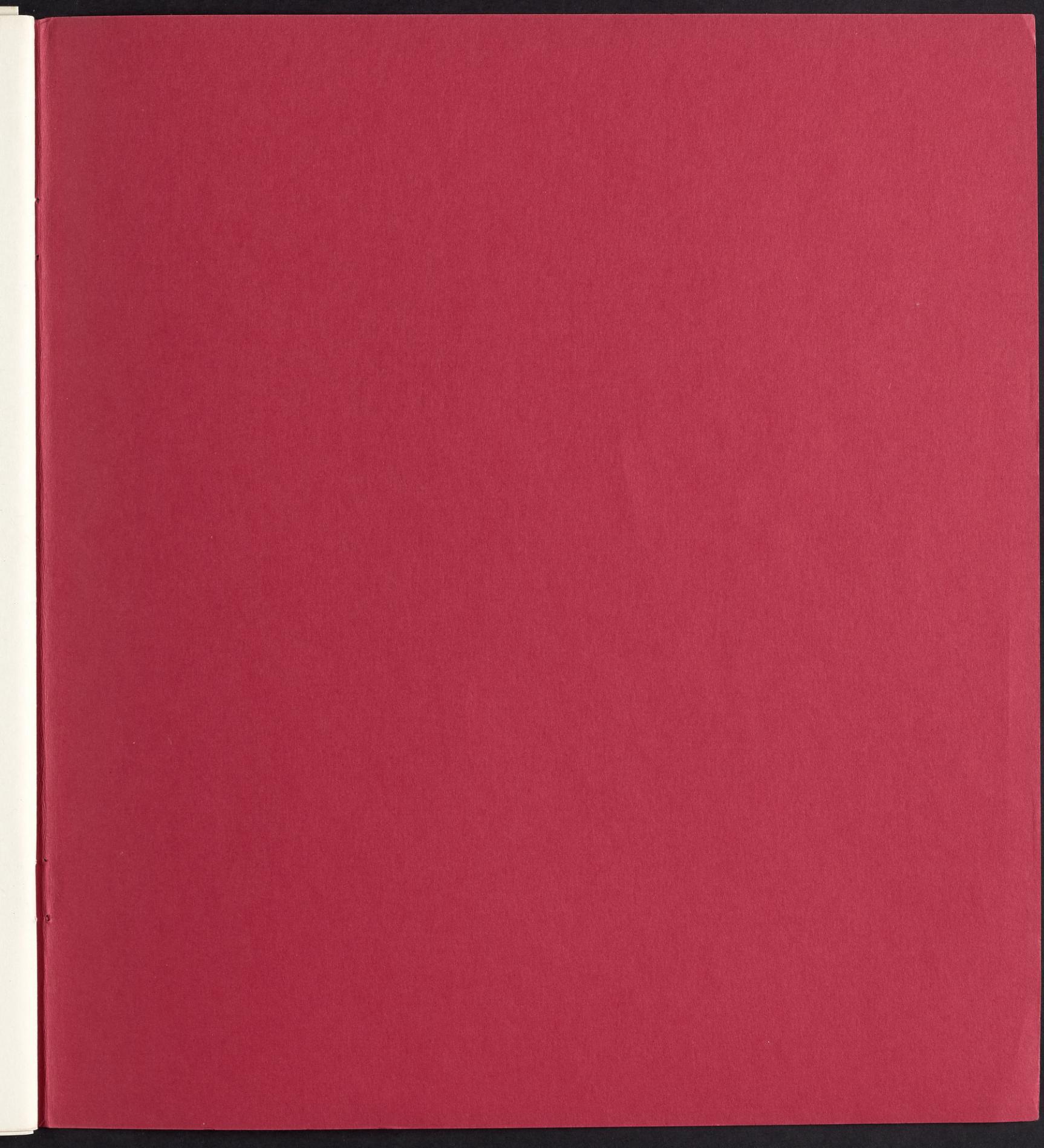
**DEAR READER,**

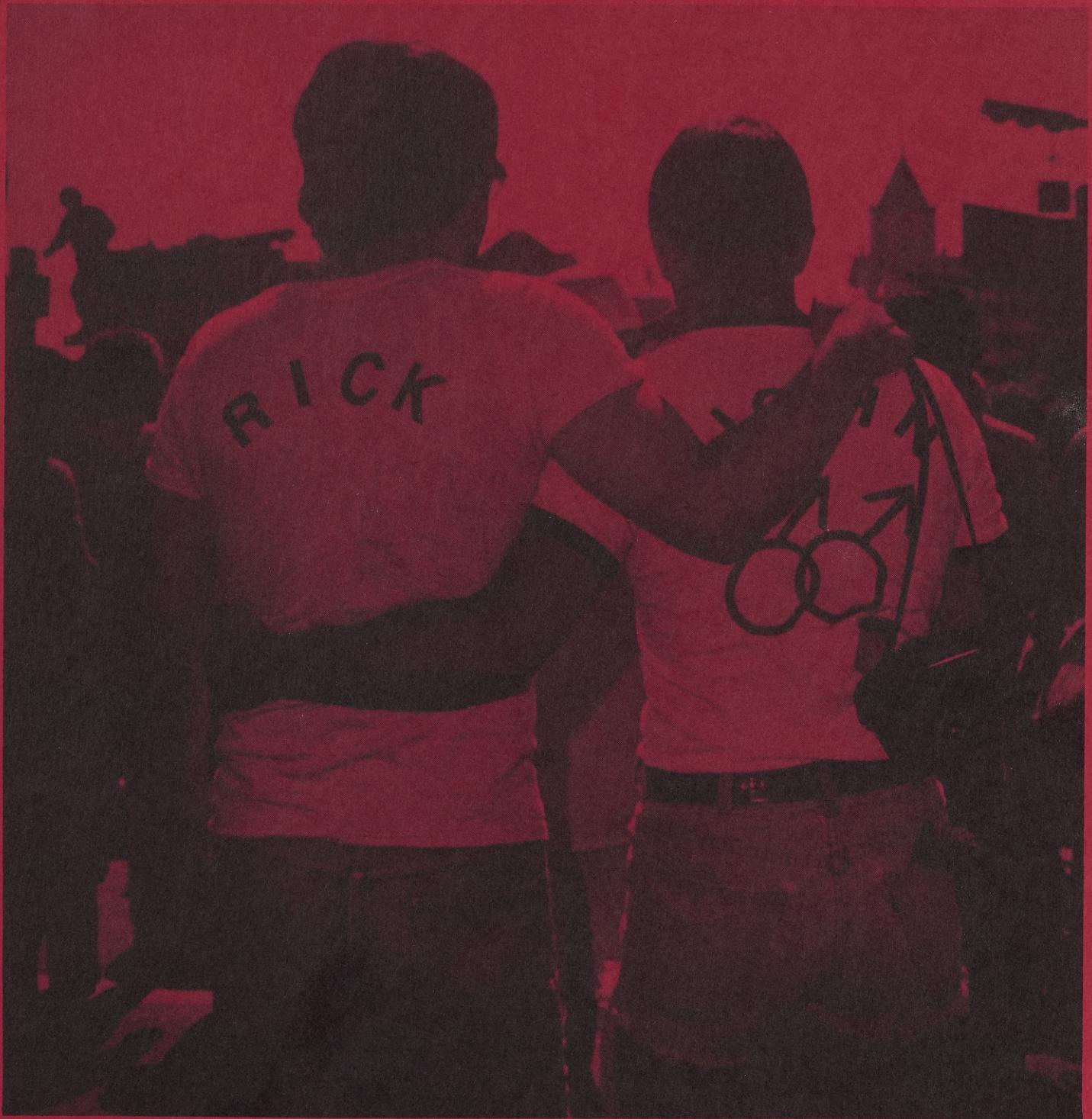
I don't like what I'm going to say any more than you. But let me lay it on the line. This literary journal will go under after the next issue (#6) unless it gets money. It's as simple as that. The editor has been supporting the quarterly himself, but his teaching job has been cut down this year and will dry up completely next year. He applied for a grant from the Coordinating Council on Literary Magazines, but did not receive it. He'll apply for another one in January.

If you believe in quality literature, if you believe that meaningful art interprets and records human experiences as they are lived, that art renders them back again so that we can more intelligently understand the world and what we are, then please get off your ass and get some donations to GAY LITERATURE/ c/o English Dept./ CSUF/Fresno, Ca. 93740. These donations can be from yourself, from your friends, from rich Sugar Daddies, from organizations looking for a Worthy Cause. (We sell subscriptions too, I might add. Give a gift subscription to somebody, to a library. Inform a couple of friends about this magazine.)

Otherwise goodbye.

The Editor





*Photo by Rusty Morris*